

# The Freeman

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terests of the country have nothing to fear from Cox and Roosevelt. Although both are progressive, they are not radical. Seldom have we entered a campaign when four such good men were the candidates of the two great parties.

Ain't that just too sweet for anything? Who would sweat beneath the burning sun of Dayton listening to buncombe, when he can sit comfortably in his easy-chair and have the real thing furnished him so handy-like?

BROTHER COX, however, showed himself strong for the League of Nations. Peace for America and the world by the entrance of the United States into the League of Nations—them's his sentiments. That is all right. He seems to be favourable towards "interpretations" that will not disturb the vital principle of the League, whatever that is. That is all right, too. At least, it would be all right if international relations would only stay put until 4 March comes around and Brother Cox is inaugurated and the Congress is convened, and prayers said by the chaplain, and everything squared away all shipshape and regular. But the trouble is that events will not wait. If they keep on at their present rate there will be a resonant explosion long enough before 4 March, and Brother Cox will have to get the League of Nations up out of the ground with benzine and a tooth-brush:

*Lentumque deflebunt nepotes  
(Relliquias animae) cadaver.*

BROTHER COX chose a fearfully infelicitous week to talk about the League of Nations. As things now stand, the choice is dealt down to where Messrs. Lloyd George and Millerand can either knuckle down to the Soviet Government or reopen the war. They can not do the former without enormous damage to the system of privilege which they represent, and they can not do the latter because their people will not stand it; and there seems to be no third choice. This is a shocking bad predicament, and as Abe Potash said, a feller could be Elijah the Prophet already, and he couldn't see how they are going to get out of it.

WHAT with Ireland, Egypt, Mesopotamia and similar beneficent enterprises here and there, England has her hands full. Organized labour has served notice on Mr. George, and served it good and hot, that as to taking up the cudgels for Poland, there is simply nothing doing. Italy, through Count Sforza, has courteously but firmly declined to resume measures hostile to Russia; which is a sure indication that her people have been heard from. Germany, apparently, is in cahoots with Russia for certain very definite purposes, quite as one would suppose she might be. This leaves France alone in the dark.

So the League of Nations, in the present emergency, could only muster Japan and ourselves among its effectives even if we were in it. We know how foreigners count upon the naïve and confiding inexperience of the United States in international matters; but making all due allowances, we still think it would take a great deal of our Daytonian brother's perfervid oratory to whoop up our spirits to the fighting-point in behalf of the anti-Soviet undertaking. Even the present Administration found it convenient to help Poland by stealth. That leaves Japan; well, Japan has her own fish to fry in Manchuria and Mongolia, and can not very well leave them to burn while

THEIR was the kind of talent that somehow ought to be dug up and set going upon Messrs. Harding and Cox. When people of a bygone age could talk thus learnedly, convincingly, beautifully, about nothingness and the forces that reside in nothingness, and not only reside there but caper around and do all sorts of astonishing things, we feel ashamed of the poverty of our national culture. This order of ability is not bred among us any more, and this Presidential campaign, having put a monumental premium on it, discloses our threadbare insolvency in a most embarrassing way.

THE real speech of acceptance, though, the real message to the people—that is to say, to the only people who count—was not spoken by Brother Cox at Dayton, but handed out on the side, as it were, by Brother Babson in the *United States Bulletin* which was started during the war by George Creel and subsequently taken over by Brother Babson, and is now, according to its own statement, "presenting such news necessary to keep business men properly informed on current events." We are all for Brother Babson, especially since his endorsement of the Interchurch World Movement. There is no humbug about him; everything he says goes straight to centres. You get a play for your money with Roger. Here is what he says in his leading editorial for the issue of 12 July, just as he published it, italics and all:

Although the Democratic slogan will be: Cox, the Friend of Man v. Harding, the Friend of Money, yet the legitimate in-

she runs around tidying up for her erstwhile associates. If the League of Nations, which has so captivated the inflammable imagination of our rural brother, is in any better shape by 4 March than it is at present, may we be there to see!

THE likelihood, as we see it, is that when the dray backs up to the White House to unload Brother Cox's domestic *lares*, Poland will be back where she belongs, the corridor will be obliterated, the frontiers will be "rectified" considerably from their provisional arrangement as per the Versailles treaty, and the pernicious influence of the Soviet Government will have made itself powerfully felt as a solvent upon many venerable institutions now existing in the civilization of Europe—so powerfully, indeed, that Brother Cox may not know quite what to make of all the changes he sees, even though they take place before his eyes.

WE hope that everyone will take pains to read Mr. Bertrand Russell's impressions of Russia, now being published by our excellent friend the New York *Nation*. Here at last is respectable criticism of the Soviet Government, criticism that really counts, criticism that justifies all one's impatience with the stupid blackguarding of intellectual plug-uglies—the John Spargo kind of thing and the newspaper-editorials, practically everything, in fact, that hitherto has passed muster among us for competent criticism. Why could we not have had it before; and why, when it did come, must it be the republication of the work of a foreign critic? It is mere idleness to say that the United States has no one to match Mr. Bertrand Russell in an undertaking of this kind. We can name offhand four men, any one of whom we firmly believe could do even a better piece of work than Mr. Russell's—Mr. George Noyes of the University of California, Bishop Charles D. Williams of Detroit, Dr. Frederick Peterson and Mr. Robert H. Lowie. These are men of culture, with the disinterestedness and objectivity that culture promotes, willing to see things as they are and able to describe them when they see them, and with a deep sense and knowledge of the spiritual qualities of human life. In a word, they are good critics. Yet we have not heard of any newspaper that has urged any of them, or any one like them, to go to Russia and take carte blanche for a critical study of the most interesting and significant situation that the world has seen for a century.

MR. BERTRAND RUSSELL'S work is especially valuable to those like ourselves who have faith in the Russian revolution and expect a great deal from it. It shows us where we may possibly expect too much and hence risk disappointment; but this is the least it does for us. It stirs us to alertness against the almost inevitable preoccupation with the material well-being which is and must be the basis, but is no more than the basis, of human life in society. A jolt from Mr. Russell may reveal to us who are on the extreme Left of things-in-general, that quite unconsciously and with the best intentions otherwise, and out of a sheerly absorbing and necessary attention to economics, we have been projecting and contemplating a society whose god is its belly. This is salutary, and puts every one of the awakened in Mr. Russell's debt.

BUT perhaps the greatest service that Mr. Russell has done those at our end of the line is to steer us away from Rabbinism. Those of our peculiar bent and persuasion are perhaps a little apt to overdo our devotion to a man or a formula, and to magnify him, or it, a little beyond workaday usefulness. It may be Karl Marx or Bakunin or Henry George or Leo Tolstoy or economic determination or the class-struggle, free co-operation, or what not—the pitfall of Rabbinism is always open at our feet. Mr. Russell has pretty well forestalled any possible tendency to make a Rabbi out of Lenin, and at the

same time left our legitimate regard for Lenin's ability and statesmanship quite unimpaired. Mr. Russell should be read, as he would wish to be read, with due allowance for his one obvious limitation. Mr. Russell is an Englishman; and the educated Englishman of all kinds and under all circumstances, dead or alive, asleep or awake, drunk or sober, is a constitutionalist. He may say he is not and believe he is not, but when he comes to the scratch, he is. Several of Mr. Russell's observations and conclusions seem seriously affected by this bias—so much so, indeed, as to be questionable. But there is no doubt about the obligation under which he has placed American readers.

VERY little interest is taken in what might easily prove to be the greatest revolution of all, the procedure begun by the Sinn Fein land-courts. It is not without its comic element, though Irish barristers and judges have not yet seen the humour of it. It was a pressing economic need that ushered in the new system which undoubtedly has averted disorder and grave agrarian disturbance. Dublin Castle would certainly have had to deal with the question of the land in any event, but probably could not have dealt with it as effectively as the Sinn Fein courts; for these seem to have the support of the people, giving satisfaction and, at the same time, carrying a general influence which makes for peace. Until recently most of the work pertained to the division and purchase of the land; and landlords and tenants, irrespective of political and religious prejudices, resorted to these courts for arbitration of their cases. It is really extraordinary, after all that is taking place in Ireland, to learn that these courts seem to have a steady and calming effect upon the people; and that all sorts and conditions of men, no matter how they be divided on other questions, can appear before the court and have their economic differences settled to their satisfaction. This is a great step, and may lead to a settlement of many other issues. Now another and higher court has been set up, the High Land Commission Court of the Irish Republic, and the Dublin correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* says that—

when it opened at Claremorris in County Mayo, a barrister presided and began by a recital of his powers. He read his warrant from Dail Eireann giving him power to inquire and adjudicate upon all disputes arising out of the land, and a 'final and absolute voice in all adjudications.'

It is not only an interesting situation but an exceedingly amusing one and tends to bear out Dogberry's estimate of the law. A typical case of the working of the Sinn Fein arbitration-court as against that of the Chancery Court, may be given:

A Connaught client, a widow who is a Unionist and a Protestant, came to him for advice following a cattle-drive on a small farm which is her sole property and means of support. Two courses were open—to appeal to the Chancery Court or to a Sinn Fein arbitration. In either case she would probably be secured in possession. But if she obtained the decision from the Chancery Court it would be of no benefit to her, because, even though sufficient forces of the Government to protect the farm were placed at her disposal (which is more than doubtful), she would be in such a position that working the lands, or even living in the district, would be out of the question. On the other hand, when she had obtained a like decision from the arbitration-court she could rest assured that without a single soldier or policeman, or any munitions of war, complete effect would be given to the decision, and she would be left in undisturbed possession of the farm. In such circumstances could a solicitor conscientiously advise proceedings in the High Court?

Could this be said of the old system: "that without a single soldier or policeman or any munitions of war, complete effect would be given to the decision and she would be left in undisturbed possession of the farm"? Certainly not, in Ireland or elsewhere, as far as we know. It is evident that Sinn Fein has found in arbitration as opposed to litigation a method of settling differences that will speedily reduce law-costs and the need for so many functionaries of the bar; and it may be found very shortly that the other courts will die a natural death, as they should, not only in Ireland but everywhere.

ARCHBISHOP MANNIX tells Mr. Lloyd George that what Cardinal Mercier was to Belgium, and was most fulsomely slavered over by the British Government for being, he, the Archbishop, is now to Ireland. It is a most amusing sight to see Dr. Mannix take Cardinal Mercier by the ankles, swing him around his head and use him as a shillelagh upon Mr. George's devoted skull. One is reminded somehow of Fluellen:

I peseech you heartily, scury, lousy knave, at my desires, and my requests, and my petitions, to eat, look you, this leek: because, look you, you do not love it, nor your affections and your appetites and your digestions doo's not agree with it, I would desire you to eat it.

Only, in the play, the Welshman Fluellen had last innings; in present fact, the Welshman Lloyd George has had his innings first.

THE British Government has launched the Coercion Bill full upon Ireland; of which the least said, the better. The proceeding is quite understandable. Mr. Lloyd George and his associates, like all of us, are creatures of habit and routine. In circumstances of this kind their minds, like that of the gunman at bay, turn naturally to the idea of violence and coercion, because these are the only forces that they are accustomed to use in the abeyance of lying and chicane, and the only forces that they understood or respect or know how to use. They are quite like our own people in Washington or like any other people similarly situated. The Irish Coercion Bill is quite the kind of thing that our Congress would pass in the premises, that President Wilson would sign and that Mr. Daniels, Mr. Palmer and Mr. Newton Baker would execute—and for the same reason that the British Government has done it, because it is the only thing they know how to do. One wonders how many members of the British Government have read Matthew Arnold's Irish essays and the lectures on Celtic literature which he delivered from the Oxford chair of poetry.

THAT disarmament is impossible unless the business of gun-making be broken up, was a fact unintentionally made clear by Mr. Lloyd George at Spa. The British prime minister had remarked that he did not understand how the German Government could tolerate a state of affairs in which millions of rifles were scattered up and down the country; he himself would not put up with such a condition for three days; it was too dangerous. But, returned Dr. von Simons pointedly, there are even under British control, countries with uncollectable rifles. His retort, says the London *Daily News* correspondent, gave rise to much laughter; the French delegation especially appreciated the situation. If Mr. Lloyd George can not collect the rifles out of Ireland, for example, what should he expect from the poor, harried German Government? No wonder the Frenchmen were amused.

ENGLAND is learning to her cost that war is an expensive business in more ways than one. Not only does it entail a tremendous drain upon men and treasure, but it plays havoc with aggregations of skilled workers who are absolutely necessary for the purposes of production as soon as peace is declared. In Lancashire and Cheshire, two great manufacturing districts in England, there is a shortage in the ranks of skilled workmen. Carpenters, brick-layers, shipwrights and moulders are very scarce and the shortage takes place at a time when in many other industries short time has been resorted to as a means of staying a complete shut-down. On the other hand, semi-skilled and unskilled labour go in thousands unable to find employment, and now there is heard the cry of "the unwanted labourer." The register of the unemployed shows in the northwestern area that work is very scarce indeed for thousands of general labourers on both heavy and light work. Clerks, carmen, warehousemen and porters exceed the registered vacancies by many hundreds. Indeed the labour market in the great manufacturing districts of Great Britain seems to be in a most unsatisfactory condition. The indication, as the doctors

say, is for a scientific inquiry into the effect of war upon skilled artisans.

THE findings of such an inquiry would undoubtedly cause as much consternation now as did a similar report undertaken in Germany some twenty years ago. That report showed the effects of conscription upon skilled artisans, stating that two years service in the army not only destroyed the initiative of the young recruit for industrial purposes, but in all cases where the youth had been apprenticed to a trade that required fineness of touch, he left the army with that sense blunted, and often was wholly incapacitated for the exercise of his skilled trade. With German thoroughness one hundred of these youths were followed after leaving the army, and it was found that a large majority had to resort to the ranks of unskilled labourers to make their living. There is no doubt that the industries which depend on skilled labour in Europe are suffering enormously, not only from the shortage created by loss of life, but by the general effect of army life and its exigencies upon the men who have been demobilized. In Great Britain and Germany, it is of course a simple thing to institute an inquiry of this kind, because the system of labour-bureaus in both countries brings the authorities into touch almost every day with all classes of labour seeking employment; and the system of national insurance against sickness, unemployment, and other disabilities makes possible a record of industrial conditions at any time. But whether such an inquiry will actually be set up is quite another thing. There is, no doubt, a mass of evidence for the scientist, but those interested in this question may have to wait until the powers that be have had their little stomachful of war.

MR. CHARLES PONZI, of Boston, has created quite a stir, and at the present writing the State, Federal, and local officials are auditing his books to find out whether he is solvent. Meanwhile this extraordinary gentleman declares he has made over \$8,000,000 in the last few months by transactions in international postal-reply coupons, and continues to pay investors their original loan plus fifty per cent profit. Whether Mr. Ponzi can make good on his claims or not, he has advanced one proposition that will make him about as popular in banking-circles as a hornet in a lawn-party. Banks, he declares affably, make enormous profits; but the depositors get only a small four or five per cent on the sums they entrust to them. The balance of the profit goes to the small number of chief stock-holders. Mr. Ponzi naively believes this to be wrong. He says he wishes to start a bank in which all the depositors shall be stockholders in the corporation, *pro rata* according to their deposits; which would mean in practice that the profits were spread out equitably to everybody, and that the rate of interest would be nearer ten or twenty per cent than five. He even believes it will be considerably higher. Now, one prediction can be made with confidence. Mr. Ponzi may be allowed to keep what profit he has already made out of his curious transactions, provided no law has been broken and he meets his present obligations; but he will never be allowed to start a bank of the kind he proposes. There is such a thing as something being too funny to be a joke. When Mr. Ponzi suggests that depositors shall receive the whole of the profit which the use of their own money makes possible, he is letting his sense of humour run away with him.

*The editors can not be responsible for manuscripts submitted, but if return postage be enclosed, they will do all in their power to see that rejected manuscripts are returned promptly.*

*It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily agree with the opinion of the editors, either as to substance or style. They are printed because, in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.*

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## TOPICS OF THE DAY.

### A TEST OF THE NEWS.

THE *New Republic* did a most commendable public service, and did it exceedingly well, in getting out a special supplement to its issue of 4 August, in which the news of the Russian revolution, as handled by the *New York Times* from March, 1917, to the present, is thoroughly analyzed. The work is most painstakingly done, the spirit of it is one of great restraint, detachment and moderation, and the result is something extremely valuable like a watch or a compass, for purposes of reference. No one would need or want to read much of it at once, any more than one needs to look very long at a clock. But it is an extremely good thing to have handy as a sort of *memento mori* at such times as one feels an undue temptation to take the news-columns of the papers seriously and at their face value—if, indeed, one ever does feel such temptation after the incidental knowledge that has come to us in the past five years, knowledge that this fine enterprise of the *New Republic* has admirably served to clarify, co-ordinate and arrange, but which it does not pretend to amplify.

The showing made for the *Times* as a newspaper is naturally very bad; and by no great effort one could get up quite a show of indignation about its malpractice on the public. But this view is superficial, because it depends upon the wholly unwarranted and monstrous assumption that the *Times* is a newspaper, whereas it is nothing of the kind. The *Times*, like all its great metropolitan contemporaries, is an advertising broadsheet. In addition, it gives a certain amount of space to certain items gathered here and there in the world, and to certain pieces of writing all arranged and designed, in a general way, to meet and satisfy definite exigencies of its position as an advertising broadsheet. Once this fact is understood, there seems nothing so shockingly reprehensible about the behaviour of these journals, and we, for our part, could never quite wholeheartedly join in the general hue and cry against them. The only thing that we ever really disliked about them is their pretence of being newspapers; but this is a pretence that they nowadays only spasmodically keep up, and not very energetically, and no doubt with very little, if any, actual dishonesty of purpose; and hence it does probably only a small amount of harm. The word "newspaper," in short, has come to mean, in common use, an institution like the *Times* and its compeers, and has largely lost its original and proper significance; somewhat as the words "churl," "villain," "miscreant," for instance, and many others, have taken on a meaning that bears so remote a relation to their etymology that in any practical sense it may be said to be quite unrelated. In the strict and proper sense of the word, as describing an institution primarily for the impartial organization and publication of news, there are probably very few newspapers in the United States. We do not ourselves know of even one; but we do not know all the papers in the country, so we can by no means say that there is none.

Hence, as we remarked, we could never really foam up over the kind of thing that the *New Republic* presents in all the excellence of what M. Maurice Pelletier calls "impeccable documentation." We never could heartily join dogs with our fine crusading brother Upton Sinclair, for example, over the matters canvassed in his interesting and readable book called, "The Brass Check." The more satisfactory and human sort of procedure seems to us to be that of taking the

newspapers for what they are and for what they quite obviously mean to be and must be, and letting them go at that, instead of regarding them as angels that have somehow fallen from a wholly imaginary high estate. It not only saves strain on the nerves and temper, but is a very simple method in point of practice; much simpler than the ambitious task of reforming American journalism, and a great many, we think, more or less consciously adopt it. By way of showing its simplicity, if after the *New Republic's* brilliant effort the *Times* is not tired of serving as a *corpus vile*, let us just this once try our 'prentice hand. Take the following editorial, which appeared in the *Times* about as the *New Republic's* supplement was going on the news-stands:

In 1918 the Democrats and the Republicans made joint nominations in the Congress districts in this city where the Socialists were most numerous—the Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Twentieth. As a result, the Socialist candidate in each of these districts was beaten. In the Twelfth district Meyer London has been re-nominated by the Socialists, as Algernon Lee has been in the Thirteenth and Morris Hillquit in the Twentieth. In the Fourteenth Charles W. Ervin has been named in place of Scott Nearing. The National Security League appeals for fusion again this fall in those districts. No partisan heat of "a presidential year" ought to prevent this salutary union. In the Twelfth District in 1918, Mr. London's vote was only some 800 less than the combined Republican and Democratic vote. In none of these districts can the defenders of the American system of government afford to take any chance next November. It is not a question of the right of Socialists to vote or to be represented, but of the will of the majority.

About two hundred words; and yet any person with ordinary intelligence and experience of life, after reading them, knows, for all practical purposes, everything about the *Times* that the *New Republic's* supplement can possibly tell him. He can forecast to the dot what the stand of the *Times* would be on any conspicuous public question, because he knows precisely what interests the editorial was written to satisfy and promote. He knows, therefore, precisely how he should regard and weigh whatever the *Times* chooses to print as news, and if he is reasonable, he will expect from the *Times* nothing but what he gets. Why should he expect either more or less? Or again, take the editorial which the *New York Evening Post* devoted to the *New Republic's* supplement. Anyone, it seems to us, after reading that editorial would know the *Evening Post* inside and out, from garret to cellar, know it as though he had been cradled in its hell-box and had spent his best years in jeffing for takes around its frisket (we do not know what all that means, but we read it once in a book about printing, and quote from memory—too much trouble to look it up now). There are, then, naturally and inevitably, many items of important news which the *Times* and the *Evening Post* would approach with very long teeth, and many which must be shaded to suit their peculiar requirements, some of them shaded probably out of any kind of reasonable correspondence with fact. This is intelligible. What we can not understand is why one should expect it to be otherwise, since these publications are in no proper sense newspapers. Why should the *New Republic*, indeed, gravely go through the motions of pretending, even to itself, that the *Times* is a newspaper, when it is not? Going back to the *New Republic's* own subject, the news of Russia: there are before us now three New York papers of this morning's issue, 7 August. The *Sun's* headline says, "Allies Prepare for Drive on Reds"; the *Times* says, "Premiers to Meet on Soviet Note"; and the *World* says "Britain Accepts Terms of Reds." Take your choice—all the

same price. This sort of thing clearly and obviously is not the work of newspapers, but of an altogether different kind of institution.

No, we never saw our way to complain of American journalism for holding to a special point of view or for shuffling its news to square with that point of view. Our venerable friend the New York *Evening Post* misses the mark about as generously as usual when it talks about the "tiresome radical banalities concerning a venal press given over to falsehood for the enslavement of mankind and the benightment of reason." Fiddlesticks, brother!—that is the least of the radical's troubles, you may depend upon it. We are the real thing in radicalism and speak with authority; we know what we are talking about. What really worries us is not that the papers support a policy that we dislike, but that they should put such inconceivably scurvy workmanship into supporting it. The *Evening Post's* editorial, which was in the issue of 2 August, is too long to quote, unfortunately; but look at the one quoted from the *Times*! One does not dream of blaming the *Times* for its interest in the integrity of privilege, but what a method!—crude, raw, repellent, hob-nailed, there is but one word for it, it is illiterate. It is the kind of thing that, as the crusty Edinburgh Reviewers used to say, would be done by a butcher's apprentice. And as far as the news-dispatches are concerned, one can go through them in any issue of any great metropolitan paper, hopping gaily from one glaring and inartistic inconsistency to another, and come out at the end dry-shod.

Too much by far, in our judgment, has been made of the immorality of American journalism and not half enough of its stupidity and illiteracy. There is so much to be said, such a plausible case to be made out for the old order, that one hates to see the job so shockingly botched. This is what really worries the radical, and it is not at all the kind of thing that our fine old friend the *Evening Post* imagines to be weighing on our mind. When we read the *Evening Post's* editorial, for instance, we never once thought of the moral aspects of the *Post's* case, but simply of what W. H. Mallock would have made of a chance like that. When Mr. Huxley broke a lance for the established order with Mr. Thorold Rogers, for example, his backers got their money's worth and so did the spectators. Compare the criticism of the Soviet Government as done by any editorial writer in this country, and as done by Mr. Bertrand Russell! The real question is, are the responsible managers of privilege in this country really content to do no more for American literature than accept the rawest sort of press-agent's work as a complete and proper intellectual defence of privilege? Have they no more respect, no more sentimental regard for the amenities of their own cause, than to promote it only by such vulgar and contemptible means? We appeal to Judge Gary, as perhaps one of the most active and conspicuous defenders of privilege. A daily paper of the right sort would be a great deal to ask; but could he not at least use his influence to get us up a weekly? A weekly that should do in its own way, with the same admirable and formidable competence, sureness and thoroughness, the same general job that the *Spectator*, for instance, does in England? It would not be much of a money-maker or get a very large circulation, but we believe it would shortly pay its way. Besides, money is not everything; we put it to Judge Gary that among 100,000,000 people, the cause deserves at least one national organ of super-excellent intelligence and fearsome respectability.

Then, too, the judge, out of the goodness of his heart, might well consider the radicals and liberals. After all, they are vertebrate animals; they could listen to reason and respect it and become amenable to it, and would really be glad to do so if they ever heard any; but they never do. It is all very well for the *Evening Post* to twit the radicals about their "tiresome banalities," but what on earth does the *Evening Post* or any other paper of its kind ever give them to sharpen and clarify their minds? Nothing but the sneers of a cheap end-man's wit, or else—and more frequently—mere vulgar and indiscriminate slang-whanging, interspersed with spates of neurasthenic slumgullion that by no stretch of civility or good-will can possibly be treated as respectable dialectics. What wonder that the liberals—poor souls!—grow pudgy and stodgy, and that the radicals become ingrowing and aberrant? Think of the editors of the *New Republic*, good men as they are, reduced to the miserable necessity of wading through more than one thousand issues of the *New York Times*, and making an abstract and tabulation of the news about Russia! —and yet, what better could they find to do? It is one of the saddest sights we ever saw.

#### OIL AND TROUBLED WATERS.

My relations with foreign Powers continue to be friendly. I am happy to say that my negotiations, both with the German Government and the Ottoman Government as regards matters of importance to the commercial and industrial interests of this country in Mesopotamia, are rapidly approaching a satisfactory issue, while questions which have long been pending with the Turkish Empire in respect to regions bordering on the Persian Gulf are in a fair way towards an amicable settlement.—*From the King's speech to Parliament, 10 February, 1914.*

An ordinary American business man might about as well give up trying to understand the controversy now in progress between his Government and the European Allies on the question of Mesopotamian oil. All he knows about it is what the Government thinks it worth while to tell him; and the latest communication from the State Department reporting information that an Anglo-French petroleum-agreement has been published by the British Government, is not particularly illuminating. The statement adds:

The Department has made representations to the British Government regarding certain provisions that apply to petroleum in mandate-territories and is giving careful consideration to other features of the agreement.

All the ordinary business man can get out of this is that there is some kind of quarrel afoot over division of spoils. His newspaper does not enlighten him as to the cause of the quarrel. Editors who support the Paris covenant only lead him astray when in dealing with this question, they write such arrant nonsense as that this is—

a striking illustration of what may be expected from the situation in which the United States, as a signatory of the Versailles Treaty, was placed by the failure of the Republican Senate to ratify that instrument and permit the United States to take an active part in working out the great post-war problems.

There is a history to this question which is certainly worth reviving. In some European quarters it is very well known; it was frequently discussed in May and June, 1914. Probably this history has not been given to the American public. Those, however, who wish to be informed on this subject might turn back to the King's speech of the spring of 1914, and there they will find that the Houses of Parliament were informed that the troubles in Mesopotamia which had beset the Government were "approaching a satisfactory issue."

This had reference not altogether to the question of the Bagdad Railway and its extensions, but to the disposition of oil-areas and the allotment of them to oil syndicates. A Bagdad treaty had, in fact, been before Sir Edward Grey for consideration and he had initialed it weeks before the war broke out. The treaty was the joint effort of British and German capitalists representing oil-syndicates; and its provisions sought to combine these interests for the purpose of exploiting Turkish territories. This was a commercial treaty favoured by Downing street and the Wilhelmstrasse, an important one, for it was an oil-alliance which sought to isolate the French as far as the Mesopotamian oil field was concerned. Unless these facts are known, it is utterly impossible for the ordinary American business man to understand the statement of M. André Tardieu, who said:

On 26 June, 1914, the British Government, after negotiations of several years, carried through by its ambassador at Constantinople, Sir Lucas Malet, had obtained from the Sultan, for the benefit of an English company, the Turkish Petroleum Company founded in March, 1914, the exclusive concession for petroleum discovered, or thereafter to be discovered, in the vilayets of Mosul and Bagdad. The Company consisted of seventy-five per cent British capital (the National Bank of Turkey, the D'Arcy group, the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Company) and twenty-five per cent German capital (the Deutsche Bank).

Now it is the allotment of the twenty-five per cent German interest that France claims. Indeed Tardieu has said that it is understood that France is to receive twenty-five per cent of the oil of those vilayets.

When the French discovered what the nature of the Anglo-German-Mesopotamian treaty was, there was something like a panic at the Quai d'Orsay, and very speedily France set all her own and the Russian machinery of war into operation. It was of course not difficult for her to do that, because Russia was hit as hard by that Anglo-German oil-alliance as France. Indeed Russia, from the north, had marched step by step with Britain from the south, in violating the integrity of Persia in quest of oil. It certainly looked as though the Entente might soon be dished by the wicked German oil-syndicates forming alliances with the British interests. Such a prospect was enough to hasten on any war that was in the offing. Something certainly had to be done to stop "the march to the East" which had been arranged by Baron von Kühlmann with the British Government. Sazonov, Sukhomlinov and other of the military and diplomatic gentry at the court of Petersburg were just the men to assist the French in their hour of need; and they, in co-operation with Poincaré and Delcassé, precipitated the war as, among other desiderata, a means of disrupting the Anglo-German commercial alliance for the exploitation of Turkish oil-territory. How close the Anglo-German interests had drawn together is shown by Mr. H. Wilson Harris, who in the London *Daily News* of 26 June, 1920, in dealing with Tardieu's statements, said:

The basis of the constitution of the company, by the way, was laid down, according to M. Tardieu, in a protocol signed at the Foreign Office in March, 1914, not only by the interested companies, but by Sir Eyre Crowe representing the British Government, and Baron von Kühlmann representing the German Government.

It was about the closest shave that secret-treaty makers ever had, and it proved conclusively that two can play the back-stairs game; for when the French Foreign Office discovered that the British Foreign Office was arranging a deal with the Turkish Government on behalf of British and German oil-syndicates

to the exclusion of the French, it became incumbent upon the French Foreign Office to upset the deal at all costs; and the costs were a sudden European war.

It is not, however, to be imagined that the State Department at Washington knows much about this business. It is so innocent of the wiles of European diplomatists and the machinations of oil-syndicates that without a blush it can talk of taking an active part in working out the great post-war problems, and it can play party-politics quite innocently until the last moment; thinking it can lead a majority of the electors of this country to imagine the oil-quarrel would never have arisen if the Republican Senate had ratified the precious Paris covenant. It is useless to assure them that for the purpose of preventing such occurrences as this, that covenant is not worth the paper it is written on, and no matter whether all the mandatories had been in the grasp of our State Department it would have been obliged in the end to do the bidding of the most powerful of the oil-syndicates. Oil is oil; and when national syndicates can not get control of it, they do not hesitate to form international syndicates to get control of it. This pretty quarrel which is now on in Europe is simply one more evidence of the utter worthlessness of State Departments in London, Berlin, Paris or Washington, for conducting the affairs of a country in an honourable straightforward manner.

### THE SOCIAL SHELLEY.

SHELLEY'S "passion for reforming the world," though attached to no system and without direct influence, inspired his notes and comments on his poems with more than passing interest. His free and eager spirit and generous sympathies made the gratuitous suffering in the sentient world intolerable to him, and caused him to speak out with a naive and earnest eloquence. He loved Leigh Hunt for his "patient and irreconcilable enmity with domestic and political tyranny and imposture," and declared that he would rather be damned with Plato and Lord Bacon than be saved in company with Paley and Malthus. His distaste for didactic poetry was no doubt due in part to the mystical nature of his genius, but was reinforced by the belief, that "until the mind can love, and admire, and trust, and hope, and endure, reasoned principles of moral conduct are seeds cast upon the highway of life, which the unconscious passenger tramples into dust, although they would bear the harvest of his happiness."

At least one convert to a vegetarian diet we have known, who acknowledged his indebtedness to the notes on "Queen Mab." He lived to a ripe old age among the enchanted lakes and mountains of Westmoreland, welcoming the stranger, and striving to retard the gradual encroachment of private ownership upon the traditional foot-paths and rights-of-way. He had found, it seems, a "perfect epicurism" in a regime of simple diet, and his kind and benevolent nature fulfilled Shelley's belief that "every man forms as it were his God from his own character"; making the man of simple habits incapable of hating or persecuting others for the love of God.

Shelley, like the young enthusiast he pictured as choosing by natural instinct a system recommended by its abstract truth, its beauty, its simplicity and its utility, despised "the brutal pleasures of the chase," regarding with horror and disappointment the thought "that beings capable of the gentlest and most admirable sympathies should take delight in the death-

pangs and last convulsions of dying animals." And when the dying animals were men, and the sport was dignified by the name of war, his horror was correspondingly intense. What, he asks, can be the connexion between the immense heap of calamities which make up war and the assertion of truth or the maintenance of justice? He quotes with approval Godwin's description of the soldier as "like the puppet of a showman, who, at the very time he is made to strut and swell and display the most farcical airs, we perfectly know can not assume the most insignificant gesture, advance either to the right or the left, but as he is moved by his exhibitor."

Shelley seemed to see that our controversies resolve themselves into the inevitable conflict between the two opposing principles of liberty and coercion. The advocate of freedom has this advantage: he may be as extreme as possible, and push his demands to the uttermost limits without injury to friend or foe; for his success depends upon willing acquiescence. Freedom can be permitted; it can not be imposed by law. Shelley regarded coercion as a proof that the weakness of a proposition was felt by its adherents. He believed that the dispassionate observer would be inclined towards a man who allowed his opinions to rest solely on the reasons he could muster for them, and repelled from "the aggressor who, daringly avowing his unwillingness or incapacity to answer them by argument, proceeded to repress the energies and break the spirit of their promulgator by that torture and imprisonment whose infliction he could command." In all these conflicts, religion appeared to him to be either a passion, a persuasion, an excuse, or a refuge; but never a check. It was used to divide mankind and suppress the fraternal instinct.

But it was the cardinal article of his faith, says Mrs. Shelley, that this earth could be made a paradise by the exercise of love, charity and equal rights. Godwin convinced him that with the natural development of the division of labour, two or three hours a day would suffice to provide for our material necessities, giving a large measure of surplus time for intellectual pursuits. "He looked on all human beings," writes Mrs. Shelley, "as inheriting an equal right to possess the dearest privileges of our nature, the necessities of life, when fairly earned by labour, and intellectual instruction." He attributed the universal discord in the political world to "the avarice of commercial monopoly, no less than the ambition of weak and wicked chiefs." His instinct led him to the threshold of great truths. He perceived that all that a man has to contribute to the common stock is his power of labour, and that the usurpation by which a few become wealthy does not in the end bring them either the comfort or security they crave:

There is no real wealth but the labour of man. Were the mountains of gold and the valleys of silver, the world would be not one grain of corn the richer; no one comfort would be added to the human race. . . . Many a fête has been given, many a woman has eclipsed her beauty by her dress, to benefit the labouring poor and to encourage trade. Who does not see that this is a remedy which aggravates, whilst it palliates, the countless diseases of society? . . . Labour is required for physical, and leisure for moral improvement; from the former of these advantages the rich, and from the latter the poor, by the inevitable conditions of their respective situations, are precluded. A State which should combine the advantages of both would be subjected to the evils of neither.

Shelley all but stated the true remedy for the unequal distribution of wealth when he pointed out to the English reformers who exclaimed against sin-

ecures, that "the true pension-list is the rent-roll of the landed proprietors." Like all untrammelled thinkers, he grasped without effort the relationship that should exist between man and nature. He knew that freedom was the key to human happiness; and in the effort to change evil conditions, acknowledged the right of resistance to tyranny and the duty of forbearance. If he looked with disgust upon the statesmen spinning crimes, his hope found expression in his willingness to take all the good possible in politics, forever aspiring to something more. "I am one of those," he wrote to Hunt, "whom nothing will fully satisfy, but who are ready to be partially satisfied by all that is practicable."

### OVERDONE.

LONDON, 6 Aug.—According to the latest information the British Government has accepted the Bolshevik note insisting on a separate peace with Poland and promising to attend the London conference subsequently on the conditions they have laid down. The truth is, Premier Lloyd George had no option, for any proposal to go to war for the Poles against Russia would have been repudiated by the country. The Labour party, to make sure no such enterprise can be undertaken, has summoned an urgent conference of trades-union and other bodies to meet in London Monday, and in the meantime has issued a manifesto protesting in the strongest terms against the support of Poland.—From the New York *World*, 7 August.

With one suggestive aspect of this dispatch—the frank assumption regarding the location of power, even political power, in the modern State—we are not here concerned. There is another equally suggestive aspect. This news-item is not hidden away in an obscure corner of the paper, nor is it under a correspondent's signature, when a certain margin of editorial interpretation of the news is considered admissible. It is an anonymous "straight" news-item printed on the first page, right hand edge or feature-column. It is not a dispatch recording the specific words of unimportant foreign ministers or obscure but hopeful Generals. It is meant to be a simple statement of the actual facts, without propaganda-bias one way or the other. It is meant to be reporting and nothing but reporting. The *World* did not shudder with editorial horror at this perverse affection of the mass and file of British labour for the success of the Bolsheviks against Poland and bury the dispatch beneath department store advertisements—it set it down as a fact, and as an important fact. In this instance at all events, whatever the editors of the newspapers may have thought, they conceived of their function as one of giving their readers the news. They went on the democratic assumption that their readers could form their own opinions for themselves if they wanted to. They evidently suspected that the public might be somewhat tired of propaganda.

The truth is, the public is extremely tired of it. Propaganda has been overdone. It has been so much overdone that even those who would most like to employ it are somewhat dubious of its efficiency at the present moment. Nothing could be more amusing or naïve than many of the special dispatches from Washington of the same week in which this dispatch was printed. The hard facts of the situation are that the bulk of people in the United States are heartily sick of Europe and all its works at the present time; that, ostrich-like as it may be (as a few excited bankers are trying now to convince us), they would like to forget the late affray and get back as far as possible "to normal," that the sending of troops to Poland on a large scale "is unthinkable." The people

of the country are not the least little bit frightened by the "menace of bolshevism" at the present moment. The menace of the Hun was so overworked during the war, the menace of the Red was so far overdone during the year following the armistice, that it takes a powerful lot of preparation and publicity to start any new menace as a going concern. This is distressing to the statesmen at the head of the Government, embarrassing in fact. "The preservation of the Polish independence," says a dispatch from Washington to the *New York Times* of 7 August, "is the immediate concern of President Wilson and his principal advisers. But they are embarrassed by their inability to take any positive action that will turn the scales in Poland's favour." "Embarrassed" is eminently correct. In one sense, it is literally true as one Associated Press item of that week stated, that the peril to civilization is greater to-day than in August, 1914; but oddly enough the people of America can not seem to get at all het up about it.

What the gigantic intellects who are running the foreign affairs of this nation have unwittingly stumbled over is a law which, in the psychology of sensation, is generally known as the law of diminishing returns. Apply a strong stimulus frequently and the reaction to it becomes progressively weaker; apply it long enough, and all reaction disappears. Indeed, when pushed *a l'outrance*, it suddenly induces a reaction the exact opposite of what normally is to be expected. In America, the menace-stimulus has been applied about to a point where almost all reaction has disappeared; in France, in England, but above all in Italy it has been laid on so generously that the present reaction of the mass and file of those respective nations has undergone the inevitable psychological transformation from terror to positive affection. In their enthusiasm at what they thought to have discovered as the infinite docility and suggestibility of the mob, the propaganda-experts of the modern political Governments lost sight of the sound old Greek maxim that to be continuously effective, what is necessary is moderation in all things. But they have been intemperate in their stirring up of hate, and are beginning to pay the penalty. They might have learned a lesson from the French Revolution but they did not. They might have remembered that the excessive—and necessary—loving of every citizen, those curious comrade-festivals in Paris where everyone fell on everyone else's neck and wept from sheer unadulterated affection, were the inevitable preliminary to the Terror and the guillotine. The publicity hate-experts made fools of themselves during the war and after, and the present benefit inures to Lenin and Trotsky. These latter, indeed, seem to have been extremely wary of falling into the same trap themselves, for whenever their more excitable apostles in other countries have too loudly sung the praises of the Bolshevik regime they have adroitly contrived to put on the soft pedal with rather a severe dose of unpleasant facts. They seem to have sensed that nothing would be ultimately more damaging to their prestige than a too rosy picture of Utopia by their idolators in other lands.

Yet this practical revelation that there are psychological limitations to one kind of propaganda, when overdone, gives no warrant whatever for sentimental optimism about the native good sense of the masses of people. Common sense still remains the most uncommon thing in the world; only geniuses seem to have a permanent monopoly of it. What has been revealed is that propaganda, to work all the time, has

to be more sophisticated and skilful than the kind employed by the crude paid attorneys of the Allied nations and America. There, too, they may have to take a lesson in method from Moscow. The present state of affairs does not reveal that propaganda *per se* is ineffective, but only that it demands a subtler technique than customarily displayed. In a contest of wits in this matter the Bolsheviks may win; indeed, at the present time, they seem in a fair way of doing just that. For they have learned the great practical advantage of letting their opponents overdo things.

From the humanistic point of view this present propaganda-battle has certain amusing aspects. But the ultimate danger goes much deeper. It is no genuine comfort that here in America for example the great mass of people are really sick to death of idealistic phrases, and are suspicious of all "hate-drives." This is merely the indifference of exhausted gullibility. It is a fact that what we know as Western civilization is in the crucible; that it actually may be destroyed within this generation, as it rapidly is being destroyed in certain parts of Central Europe to-day. It seems also a fact to us, even if Orientals might plausibly look quizzical, that Western civilization has built up certain graciousnesses, expanded certain humane traditions, developed certain cultural amenities, which it would be a pity to have swept away in a bitter civil war over economic adjustment. But we are so tired of propaganda and lies and partisanship, so sick of newspaper-filth, that we prefer to avoid looking at the facts, prefer to be sceptical of all attempts at assessment. If we were not the victims of six years of just this kind of propaganda-battle, we should be busy thinking over our own civilization, trying and assessing it, searching for its genuine values. We should be busy devising ways and means of preserving what we then thought might bear the ultimate test of the disinterested mind. Instead we are just drifting, letting the blind forces of events carry us where it will, even if it be to destruction.

For the one important loss of the war and the peace, has been the loss of our greatest spiritual possession, intellectual integrity. We have so poisoned the environment that only the cynic or the paid attorney can survive without too great difficulty. The command now is, be indifferent to everything or be paid by somebody. We do not want, we do not welcome, we shall shortly cease even to understand, the disinterested mind. We suspect, and for the most part rightly suspect, everybody of having some secret ax to grind. We take nobody at his face value. We smell an ulterior purpose in everything. We have arranged things so that very soon intellectual integrity will become a positive disability, and the person possessing it a fit subject for the psychopathic ward. This is a mood far worse than active intolerance or positive error. It is a mood of low intellectual vitality; it is the aftermath of six years of overdoing.

#### REMINISCENCES OF TOLSTOY: V.

*I include here an unfinished letter written by me under the influence of the "going away" of Leo Nikolaievitch from Yasnaya Polyana, and of his death. I publish the letter just as it was written at the time and without correcting a single word; and I do not finish it, for somehow or other this is not possible.—MAXIM GORKY.*

LEO TOLSTOY is dead.

A telegram came containing the commonest of words: "is dead."

It struck me to the heart: I cried with pain and anger, and now, half crazy, I imagine him as I knew and saw

him; I am tormented by a desire to speak with him. I imagine him in his coffin; he lies like a smooth stone at the bottom of a stream, and in his grey beard, I am sure, is quietly hidden that aloof, mysterious little smile. And at last his hands are folded peacefully; they have finished their hard task.

I remember his keen eyes—they saw everything through and through—and the movements of his fingers as though they were perpetually modelling something out of the air, his talk, his jokes, his favourite peasant words, his elusive voice. And now I see what a vast amount of life was embodied in the man, how inhumanly clever he was, how terrifying.

I once saw him as, perhaps, no one has ever seen him. I was walking over to him at Gaspra along the coast, and behind Yussupov's estate, on the shore, among the stones I saw his smallish, angular figure in a grey, crumpled, ragged suit and crumpled hat. He was sitting with his head on his hands, the wind blowing the silvery hairs of his beard through his fingers: he was looking into the distance out to sea, and the little greenish waves rolled up obediently to his feet and fondled them as though they were telling something about themselves to the old magician. It was a day of sun and cloud, and the shadows of the clouds glided over the stones, and with the stones the old man grew now bright and now dark. The boulders were large, riven by cracks and covered with smelly sea-weed; there had been a high tide. He, too, seemed to me like an old stone come to life, who knows all the beginnings and the ends of things, who considers when and what will be the end of the stone, of the grasses of the earth, of the waters of the sea, and of the whole universe from the pebble to the sun. And the sea is part of his soul, and everything around him comes from him, out of him. In the musing motionlessness of the old man I felt something fateful, magical, something which went down into the darkness beneath him and stretched up like a search-light into the blue emptiness above the earth; as though it were he, his concentrated will, which was drawing the waves to him and repelling them, which was ruling the movements of cloud and shadow, which was stirring the stones to life. Suddenly, in a moment of madness, I felt, "It is possible, he will get up, wave his hand, and the sea will become solid and glassy, the stones will begin to move and cry out, everything around him will come to life, acquire a voice, and speak in their different voices of themselves, of him, against him." I can not express in words what I felt rather than thought, at that moment; in my soul there was joy and fear, and then everything blended in one happy thought: "I am not an orphan on the earth, so long as this man lives on it."

Then I walked on tip-toe away, in order that the pebbles might not scrunch under my feet, not wishing to distract his thoughts. And now I feel I am an orphan, I cry as I write—never before have I cried so unconsolably and in such bitter despair. I do not know whether I love him; but does it matter, love of him or hatred? He always aroused in me sensations and agitations which were enormous, fantastic; even the unpleasant and hostile feelings which he aroused were of a kind not to oppress but rather to explode the soul; they made it more sensitive and capacious. He was grand when, with his boots scraping over the ground, as though he were imperiously smoothing its unevenness, he suddenly appeared from somewhere, from behind a door or out of some corner, and came towards you with the short, light, quick step of a man accustomed to walk a great deal on the earth. With his thumbs in his belt he would stop for a second, looking around quickly with a comprehensive glance, a glance which at once took in anything new and instantly absorbed the meaning of everything.

"How do you do?"

I always translated these words into: "How do you do? There's pleasure for me, and for you there's not much sense in it; but still, how do you do?"

He would come out looking rather small, and immediately everyone round him would become smaller than

he. A peasant's beard, rough but extraordinary hands, simple clothes; all this external, comfortable democratism deceived many people, and I often saw how Russians who judge people by their clothes—an old slavish habit—began to pour out a stream of their odious "frankness," which is more properly called "the familiarity of the pigsty."

"Ah, you are one of us! That's what you are. At last, by God's grace, I am face to face with the greatest son of our native land. Hail for ever! I now bow to you."

That is a sample of Muscovite Russian, simple and hearty, and here is another, but "free thinkerish":

"Leo Nikolaievitch, though I disagree with your religious-philosophical views, I deeply respect in your person the greatest of artists."

And suddenly, under his peasant's beard, under his democratic crumpled blouse, there would rise the old Russian *barin*, the grand aristocrat: then the nose of the simple-hearted visitor, educated and all the rest, instantly became blue with intolerable cold. It was pleasant to see this creature of the purest blood, to watch the noble grace of his gestures, the proud reserve of his speech, to hear the exquisite pointedness of his murderous words. He showed just as much of the *barin* as was needed for these serfs, and when they called out the *barin* in Tolstoy, it appeared naturally and easily, and crushed them so that they shrivelled up and whined.

One day I was returning from Yasnaya Polyana to Moscow with one of these "simple-hearted" Russians, a Moscow man, and for a long time he could not recover his breath, but kept on smiling woefully and repeating in astonishment: "Well, well, that was a cold bath. He's severe . . . pooh!"

And in the middle of it all, he exclaimed apparently with regret: "And I thought he was really an anarchist. Everyone keeps on saying 'anarchist, anarchist' and I believe it . . ."

The man was a large rich manufacturer, with a great belly and a face the colour of raw meat; why did he want Tolstoy to be an anarchist? One of the "profound mysteries" of the Russian soul!

When Leo Nikolaievitch wished to please, he could do so more easily than a clever and beautiful woman. Imagine a company of people of all kinds sitting in his room: the Grand Duke Nicolai Mikhailovitch, the house-painter Ilya, a social-democrat from Yalta, the Stundist Patzuk, a musician, a German, the manager of the estates of Countess Kleinmichel, the poet Bulgakov; and all look at him with the same enamoured eyes. He explains to them the teaching of Lao-Tse, and he seems to me an extraordinary man-orchestra, possessing the faculty of playing several instruments at the same time, a brass trumpet, a drum, harmonium, and flute. I used to long to look at him just as the others did. And now I long to see him once more—and I shall never see him again.

Journalists have come asserting that a telegram has been received in Rome "denying the rumour of Tolstoy's death." They bustled and chattered, redundantly expressing their sympathy with Russia. The Russian newspapers leave no room for doubt.

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To lie to him, even out of pity, was impossible; even when he was seriously ill, one could not pity him. It would be banal to pity a man like him. They ought to be taken care of, cherished, not loaded with the wordy dust of worn out, soulless words.

He used to ask: "You don't like me?" and one had to answer: "No I don't."

"You don't love me?"—"No, to-day I don't love you."

In his questions he was merciless, in his answers reserved, as becomes a wise man.

He used to speak with amazing beauty of the past, and particularly of Turgenev; of Fet always with a good-natured smile and always something amusing; of Niek-rassov coldly and sceptically; but of all writers exactly

as if they were his children and he, the father, knew all their faults, and—there you are!

He would point out their faults before their merits, and every time he blamed some one it seemed to me that he was giving alms to his listeners because of their poverty; to listen to him then made one feel awkward; one's eyes fell before his sharp little smile and—nothing remained in one's memory.

Once he argued fiercely that G. Y. Uspensky wrote in the Tula dialect, and had no talent at all. And later I heard him say to Anton Paulovitch Chekhov: "He (Uspensky) is a writer! In the power of his sincerity he recalls Dostoievsky, only Dostoievsky went in for politics and coqueted while Uspensky is more simple and sincere. If he had believed in God, he would have been a sectarian."

"But you said he was a Tula writer and had no talent."

He drew his shaggy brows down over his eyes and said: "He wrote badly. What kind of language does he use? —there are more punctuation marks than words. Talent is love. One who loves is talented. Look at lovers, they are all talented."

Of Dostoievsky he spoke reluctantly, constrainedly, evading or repressing something: "He ought to have made himself acquainted with the teaching of Confucius or the Buddhists; that would have calmed him down. The main point to realize is that he was a man of rebellious flesh; when angry bumps would suddenly rise on his bald head, and his ears would move. He felt a great deal, but he thought poorly; it is from the Fourierists, from the Butashevitch and the others, that he learnt to think, and afterwards all his life long he hated them. There was something Jewish in his blood. He was suspicious without reason, ambitious, heavy, and unfortunate. It is curious that he is so much read. I can't understand why. It is all painful and useless, because all those Idiots, Adolescents, Raskolnikovs, and the rest of them, they are not real; it is all much simpler, more understandable. It's a pity people don't read Lieskov, he's a real writer—have you read him?"

"Yes, I like him very much, especially his language."

"He knew the language marvellously, even the tricks. Strange that you should like him; somehow you are not Russian; your thoughts are not Russian—is it all right; you're not hurt at my saying that? I am an old man, and, perhaps, I can no longer understand modern literature, but it seems to me that it is all not Russian. They begin to write a curious kind of verse; I don't know what these poems are or what they mean. One has to learn to write poetry from Pushkin, Tyutchev, Fet. Now you," he turned to Chekhov, "you are Russian. Yes, very, very Russian."

And smiling affectionately, he put his hand on Chekhov's shoulder; and the latter became uncomfortable and began in a low voice to mutter something about his bungalow and the Tartars.

He loved Chekhov and when he looked at him his eyes were tender and seemed almost to stroke Anton Paulovitch's face. Once, when Anton Paulovitch was walking on the lawn with Alexandra Lvovna, Tolstoy, who at the time was still ill and was sitting in a chair on the terrace, seemed to stretch towards them, saying in a whisper: "Ah, what a beautiful, magnificent man: modest and quiet like a girl. And he walks like a girl. He's simply wonderful."

One evening, in the twilight, half closing his eyes and moving his brows, he read a variant of the scene in "Father Sergius" where the woman goes to seduce the hermit: he read it through to the end, and then, raising his head and shutting his eyes, he said distinctly: "The old man wrote it well, well."

It came out with such amazing simplicity, his pleasure in its beauty was so sincere, that I shall never forget the delight which it gave me at the time, a delight which I could not, did not know how to express, but which I could only suppress by a tremendous effort. My heart

stopped beating for a moment, and then everything around me seemed to become fresh and revivified.

One must have heard him speak in order to understand the extraordinary, indefinable beauty of his speech; it was, in a sense, incorrect, abounding in repetitions of the same word, saturated with village simplicity. The effect of his words did not come only from the intonation and the expression of his face, but from the play and light in his eyes, the most eloquent eyes I have ever seen. In his two eyes Leo Nikolaievitch possessed a thousand eyes.

Once Suler, Sergei Lvovitch, Chekhov and some one else, were sitting in the park and talking about women: he listened in silence for a long time and then suddenly said:

"And I will tell the truth about women, when I have one foot in the grave. I shall tell it, jump into my coffin, pull the lid over me, and say, 'Do what you like now.' The look he gave us was so wild, so terrifying that we all fell silent for a while.

He had in him, I think, the inquisitive, mischievous wildness of a Vaska Buslaiev and also something of the stubbornness of soul of a Protopop Avvakum, while above or at his side lay hidden the scepticism of a Tchaadayer. The Avvakumian element harried and tormented with its preachings the artist in him: the Novgorod wildness upset the Shakespeare and Dante in him, while the Tchaadaverian element scoffed at his soul's amusements and, by the way, its agonies. And the old Russian man in him dealt a blow at science and the State, the Russian driven to passivity of anarchism by the barrenness of all his efforts to build up a more human life.

Strange! This Buslaiev characteristic in Tolstoy was perceived through some mysterious intuition by Olaf Gulbranson, the caricaturist of *Simplicissimus*: look closely at his drawing, and you will see how startlingly he has got the likeness of the real Tolstoy, what intellectual daring there is in that face with its veiled and hidden eyes, for which nothing is sacred and which believe "neither in a sneeze, nor a dream, nor the cawing of a bird."

The old magician stands before me, alien to all, a solitary traveller through all the deserts of thought in search of an all-embracing truth which he has not found—I look at him and, although I feel sorrow for the loss, I feel pride at having seen the man, and that pride alleviates my pain and grief.

It was curious to see Leo Nikolaievitch among "Tolstoyans"; there stands a noble belfry and its bell sounds untiringly over the whole world, while round about run tiny, timidous dogs whining at the bell and distrustfully looking askance at one another as though to say, "Who howled best?" I always thought that these people infected the Yasnaya Polyana house, as well as the great house of Countess Panin, with a spirit of hypocrisy, cowardice, mercenary and self-seeking pettiness, and legacy-hunting. The "Tolstoyans" have something in common with those friars who wander in all the dark corners of Russia, carrying with them dogs' bones and passing them off as relics, selling "Egyptian darkness" and the "little tears of Our Lady." One of these apostles, I remember, at Yasnaya Polyana refused to eat eggs so as not to wrong the hens; but at Tula railway-station he greedily devoured meat, saying: "The old fellow does exaggerate." Nearly all of them like to moan and kiss one another; they all have boneless perspiring hands and lying eyes. At the same time they are practical fellows and manage their earthly affairs cleverly.

Leo Nikolaievitch, of course, well understood the value of the "Tolstoyans," and so did Sulerzhizky whom Tolstoy loved tenderly and whom he always spoke of with a kind of youthful ardour and fervour. Once one of these "Tolstoyans" at Yasnaya Polyana explained eloquently how happy his life had become and how pure his soul, after he accepted Tolstoy's teaching. Leo Nikolaievitch leant over and said to me in a low voice: "He's lying, the rogue, but he does it to please me . . ."

Many tried to please him, but I did not observe that they did it well or with any skill. He rarely spoke to me on his usual subjects of universal forgiveness, loving one's neighbour, the Gospels, and Buddhism, evidently because he realized at once that all that would not go down with me. I greatly appreciated this.

MAXIM GORKY.

### GOVERNMENT BY EVASION.

LOOKING back at the Chicago conventions of the Committee of Forty-eight, the Labour Party and the Farmer-Labour party, it becomes evident that the chance for a new party has been lost as far as this Presidential election is concerned. Nevertheless, the failure at Chicago was a necessary process of elimination and clarification, which it seems had to be gone through before a sound new movement could get under way.

The need for a new party has, of course, not passed. There is still no party to represent the millions of voters who can follow neither the unalloyed conservatism of the Republicans and Democrats nor the equally unalloyed communism of the socialists and their offshoot, the Farmer-Labourites. The work of economic change through a non-reactionary and non-socialist programme is important and still unbegun. Sooner or later it must be undertaken. The Chicago episode was also of considerable service in bringing out the differences between the believers in communism and the believers in individualism; and in weeding from the ranks of the latter the people whose ideas should naturally have placed them with the former. It likewise served to classify those who had no economic principles at all, and who threw in their lot with the Farmer-Labour party, not because they understood whither the Farmer-Labourites were bound, but for the quite human reason that they had come to Chicago eager for action, and with all sails set for nowhere in particular; and the course laid out by the Farmer-Labourites seemed, at first blush, to promise a more lively and romantic adventure.

Writing in the *New Republic*, Mr. William Hard, that most excellent critic of detached events, enters hotly into the spirit of the Farmer-Labourites. As full of zeal as a Mormon elder, Mr. Hard sees in the formation of the Farmer-Labour party, America answering the call of a reborn Europe. He interprets the action of the joint convention as a triumph for collectivism and a crushing defeat to the worn-out individualistic philosophy of people like Mr. Record, Mr. McCurdy, Mr. Gilson Gardner and myself.

Let us look into this a moment. For I would very much like to bet Mr. Hard that, in a cooler mood, he will realize that the victory of the Farmer-Labourites over the so-called conservatives of the Committee of Forty-eight was not an answer to New Europe's hail, nor a triumph of anything new whatever. On the contrary, it was simply a socialist victory accomplished by socialist labour-leaders, at a gathering largely made up of socialists. And, as the dust of battle settles, there appears to be nothing more novel or significant about it than about any socialist victory, such as we have frequently experienced in Chicago, Milwaukee or Paterson. With few exceptions, the delegates and especially the leaders, who amalgamated under the Farmer-Labour standard, were socialists. Certainly the dominating personalities in the Farmer-Labour party are all actual socialists or back-sliding socialists. Mr. Buck, Mr. Nockels, Mr. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Lefkowitz and Mr. W. Z. Foster are socialists. Mr. Max Hayes, the Vice-presidential candidate, is a socialist of twenty years standing. Mr. Toscan Bennett

is an English guild-socialist; and it was he who informed the Conference Committee with no little pride that the programme he represented was Marxian socialism.

As to those of the Forty-eighters who went over to the Farmer-Labour party, they too were for the most part socialists. It will be recalled that the questionnaire we sent out amply revealed our socialist following, as in the matter of Presidential candidates Mr. Debs came in only after LaFollette, Hoover and Johnson; in fact, he got from three to six times as many votes as Frazier, Walsh, Bryan or Howe, or any member of the Committee of Forty-eight.

As to the South Dakota delegation from the Non-partisan League, to which Mr. Hard accords, I think, a good deal of importance, it is a minor organization which is at loggerheads with Townley and the North Dakota Non-partisan League. It is quite unrepresentative of the Non-partisan movement; and I am informed that its delegation was, like the others, to a large extent made up of socialists.

In a word, Mr. Hard's so-called "collectivist" coup at Chicago, when examined under the microscope, resolves itself into something quite prosaic; to wit, the capture of the convention by a few hundred socialists, excellent people, most of them, and quite familiar to us, who do not happen to be supporting Mr. Debs and the regular Socialist party this year for two outstanding reasons: (1) the weakness developed by the Socialist party since the war; and (2) the fact that a new party dominated by labour has long been planned by the Illinois socialist labour-leaders as a means of weakening Gompers's leadership in the American Federation of Labour by draining off into a new political organization the Federation's disaffected members.

Let me make it plain that I do not wish in any manner, and especially by my repeated use of the word socialist, to imply the least disrespect for Mr. Debs, or for the Socialist party or its tenets. Every man who appreciates courage, integrity and devotion to a cause, must hold Eugene Debs in the highest esteem. And the Socialist party, though I can not believe in its fundamental doctrine of nationalization of industry, has long seemed to me to be the only political party that can boast either principles or a conscience. Nor do I wish to criticize Mr. Hard, a writer of super-excellence and a man whose warm and deep sympathies are reflected in the finest polemic writing. Nevertheless, it can not be denied that Mr. Hard has visualized and dramatized the gathering of socialists at Chicago as if it were quite a different matter from anything that has happened in the past, and indeed a turning over of a new and hopeful page of the book of time.

Respecting the conflict at Chicago between individualism and socialism, to which Mr. Hard prefers to give the term collectivism, there is no mistake about that. It was there and it was a real conflict. The view of the principal leaders of the Committee of Forty-eight remained, as it has steadily been, that nationalization of industry is bad economics, and that government should only invade the field of industry in cases where its object is to destroy private monopoly, or remove the privileges that sustain private monopoly. Let us repeat: while, for instance, we believe that the railways should be taken out of private ownership and be operated by government, we do not, as in the case of the socialists, desire government ownership for its own sake, but because (a) railways are a natural monopoly and (b) private ownership of transportation with its discriminations, rate-rebates, private

cars, etc., is one of the main bases of the trusts' power to create monopoly, to restrict production and distribution, to keep prices at artificial levels and, in ordinary times, to maintain a labour-surplus, whereby labour is made helpless, becoming, as it then does, whether organized or unorganized, a commodity of which there is a greater supply than demand. This is the basis of our public-ownership policy.

The *New Republic*, which is somewhat prone to find rattling good reasons for not discussing fundamentals, has very aptly commented that it is a difficult matter to make this position clear to the public. Especially it refers to the fact that, while we advocate government ownership and operation of the railways, we at the same time stand only for government ownership; with private operation under lease from government, of the principal natural resources, such as coal, oil, ore, large water powers, commercial timber tracts, etc. However, it does not seem to me that the distinction is more difficult, or the reasoning more complicated, than that involved in the discussion of the tariff, the money question, the League of Nations, Canadian reciprocity, or a dozen other questions which have been talked on the stump and hotly argued by the electorate for the last thirty years. Are we to suppose that the public can not be brought to comprehend that competition is desirable, natural and economical in industries like coal-mining and oil-production; and undesirable, unnatural and expensive in railroading and in the telegraph and telephone service? Are we to conclude that the electorate can not be brought to see that, while deposits of coal, oil, and all basic raw materials should be owned by the government, their development and manufacture should be carried on by private initiative? Government ownership of natural resources, coupled with a leasing system, has long been in successful operation in the United States, in the case of water powers, timber tracts, oil-wells in certain sections, sheep-ranges and cattle-ranges that are situated on government lands.

Mr. Hard in the *New Republic* and Mr. Malone in the *Freeman* apparently accept the Farmer-Labour party's economic programme as gospel. They fail to see that there is anything unsound or politically self-destructive in the platform of the Farmer-Labour party. Let us get down to cases and glance at the platform as printed in the *New Majority*, of which Mr. Robert Buck, Chairman of the Farmer-Labour party's platform-committee, is editor, and Mr. W. Z. Foster joint editor—

Public ownership and operation with democratic control of all . . . natural resources; government ownership and democratic operation of the railroads, mines and of such natural resources as are in whole or in part bases of control by special interests of basic industries and monopolies, such as lands containing coal, iron, copper, oil, large water-powers and commercial timber-tracts.

Just what does this plank mean? It appears vague, to be sure, and its phraseology is undoubtedly as loose as a Dutchman's breeches; being a composite product of Mr. Buck's ideas and of material from the St. Louis platform suggested by Mr. Record, Mr. Gardner, Mr. McCurdy and myself. Nevertheless, it stands as the expression of the Farmer-Labour party's economic creed. For this reason, it should certainly be fair to ask what would happen if a political party pledged to such a plank came into power and made good its pledge.

In the first place, the coal-mining industry of the United States would obviously become a government monopoly; not the coal-fields only, as the St. Louis platform of the Committee of Forty-eight demands,

but the mining industry itself, i. e., the mines, the machinery and the whole outfit. Private coal-mining would therefore cease. Not a pound of coal would be taken from the ground except by the pick and shovel of a government bureaucracy; but mind you, a bureaucracy "democratically controlled," whatever that means.

This, however, is not the whole programme by any means, for we have yet to explain and visualize the effect of the words "democratically controlled." The original printed draft of the platform, which the Labour party platform-committee adopted and its representatives brought into the conference-committee and fought for, and which I have before me on my desk (Mr. Dudley Field Malone, by the way, has either unwittingly misquoted it in his article in a recent issue of the *Freeman*; or rather, I suspect, mistaken the original for a later draft), was decidedly explicit. It demanded "an equal and ever-increasing voice for the workers in the management and control of industry; and the progressive elimination from such management and control, of private exploiters." This, on the whole, was plain enough. Publicly owned industry was not to be controlled by the public, but by the employees or workers. And the Labour-party members of the conference frankly stated that the intention of the plank was that the employees should have at least a fifty-one per cent representation on the board of management.

Mr. Record and myself, unable to agree to trades-union control of basic industries, and using Senator LaFollette's proposed candidacy as a club, managed to scale down this declaration to one demanding that labour should have "a share in the responsibility and management of industry; application of the principles to be developed in accordance with the experience of actual operation." But the phrase "democratic control" remained at the head of the industrial plank, unexplained and unclarified.

Undoubtedly, the words "democratic control" either mean nothing at all or they mean, as the conference committee of the Labour party held, that the labour-unions, and not the public, should have charge of our natural resources and basic industries, irrespective of the fact that this arrangement is camouflaged under the term "public ownership." It would be interesting to know what interpretation Mr. Hard and Mr. Malone would put upon their party's industrial plank, and whether they can conceive of a political party appealing to the whole American public, consumers and all, on the proposition of putting prices, wages and management of transportation and the great key-industries in the power of a comparatively small minority with none too broad a social outlook. In this arrangement, one would like to ask, just where does the public come in?

After all, we can not altogether overlook the fact that the public is; after all, a considerable group of people, not labour at all—in the eyes of Mr. Buck, Mr. Nockels and Mr. Fitzpatrick—must buy and burn coal. And by the same token, they must, in some way, be protected in their relation to these industries, or else exploited, if the above programme should ever prevail, by a labour class-control, just as at present they are being exploited by the capitalist class-control of Mr. Berwind, Mr. Rockefeller, the Reading Companies and the rest.

If we desire to complete the picture outlined by the industrial plank of Mr. Buck's platform, we must of course carry our bureaucratically-democratically controlled industrial system beyond the coal-mines. We

must extend it into the oil-industry of a dozen States, and the ore-fields of more than that number of States. It must include our water-powers that, owing to the advance in electrical science, are beginning to assume so much significance in our national life. It must be extended over the timber country and the multiple unclassified activities that have to do with all those natural resources that, as the platform has it, are "in whole or in part bases of control by special interests."

And so we find, not merely that we have now a picture of an amply Marxianized society, but a society in which the Marxian order is forced to yield to a far narrower conception of property-rights. For, whereas in the theory of Marx the natural resources and industries dependent upon them are to be owned and operated by the public and for the public good; in the prospectus of the Farmer-Labourites, these things are considered essentially as the sustenance and special privilege of a single preferred class, to wit, those who are connected with the said natural resources and industries in a labour-capacity.

At this point, and in order that there may be no misunderstanding, let me say that the project of securing for labour a share in the management of industry and of changing the status of labour from a commodity to a self-determining body with control of its own destiny, is probably just as dear to Mr. Record, Mr. McCurdy, Mr. Gardner, Mr. Hopkins and the other leaders of the Committee of Forty-eight, as to Mr. Hard or Mr. Malone or Mr. Buck. Also, we are at one with them in the belief that labour's sharing in the responsibility of industry will increase efficiency and production. But, to our regret, we are quite convinced that this will not and can not be accomplished by the easy road of making laws demanding that it shall take place; nor by trying forcibly to give industry into labour's charge, nor by strikes or any other means, except that of increasing the demand for labour by opening up the land and the natural resources, and thus bringing about a situation where there is more industry, more jobs than men to fill them; and consequently where labour will have its bargaining power restored and strengthened. In other words, labour will come into its own only when monopoly and privilege are destroyed and opportunity extended. And in the meantime, while strikes are highly necessary for labour's temporary line of defence, while laws demanding more rights for labour may be passed with educational and psychological value, labour itself must remain in its present unsatisfactory position, and no real start be made for better things, until it awakens to the necessity of playing a bigger game, and of frankly joining itself with the rest of the public in the larger task and greater adventure of freeing all the exploited classes together.

In its relation to results, political or economic, the philosophy of the Farmer-Labour party is probably not of great moment; it is doubtful whether the Farmer-Labour party will receive sufficient encouragement at the polls to make the followers of other philosophies uneasy. For it would seem that the socialists in the Farmer-Labour party would more naturally vote for Mr. Debs than for Mr. Christensen. And Mr. Debs' platform is quite as collectivist as Mr. Christensen's, and just as modern, as will be found from comparison between the two. But what does make some of us uneasy is that perfectly good and useful radicals like Mr. Hard should joyously embrace a set of principles which, if not demonstrably unsound, are at least clearly impossible of accomplishment in a

community where the interest of the majority is, theoretically at least, paramount.

Incidentally, too, these particular principles are quite untried in any existing civilization of the present time, including, be it said, Russia; for nothing of the kind proposed has been done there so far, the industrial organization having been in the hands of the exceedingly wise, timely and successful war-dictatorship of Nicolai Lenin. In England, there has been much talk of nationalization; but no industries have been actually nationalized, nor has there been any democratic management in the sense used in the Farmer-Labour platform, although the unions have succeeded in forcing by non-political means, concessions as to the employees' representation in management; a feat that was possible only because of the shortage of labour.

In rounding up his *New Republic* article on the Chicago episode, Mr. Hard is especially buoyant. He tells us that the Farmer-Labour party may be small; but never mind, it is "based on principles which everywhere else in the civilized, arrived world, have produced large results." A civilized, arrived world, with an economic philosophy that has produced large results! It comes like summer rain to know that there is on this planet some one who can see such a world around him, blessed by such plenitude of achievement.

Especially is it welcome to those unfortunate ones who have doubtless felt that we were all of us, even in Europe, still more than a little distance from our destination. But whether Mr. Hard is right or wrong in his estimate of the civilization and the arrivedness, and the fecundity in large results, of the principles which the Labour party reflects upon the screen of prophecy, and Mr. Hard paints upon the panorama of a perfected world that exists everywhere else but here, the suitability of the Farmer-Labour platform for present political uses in our forty-eight hopelessly American States remains at least problematical. We must not forget that a political platform is neither an essay nor a sermon. It is a pledge to the public of the things you will do by political means, if the public puts you in office. And the public will not put you in office, no matter how right you may be, if you offer the public too much unfamiliar doctrine at one dose. For the ultimate is always fatal in politics; and usually the extreme Left's principal function is to serve as an aid, comfort, justification and walking-delegate for the extreme Right.

In the meantime, irrespective of the attempts of the Committee of Forty-eight to found a new party, we are for the next four years to be in the hands of the old ones. We are confronted with a railway situation that promises, through the Esch-Cummins bill, a yearly rate-increase in the neighbourhood of a billion dollars, which, according to Federal estimates, will mean a tax on the public, in increased prices of commodities, of probably four or five times that amount. We are in for a restriction of industry and of farming, due to high rates and shortened credit. We are also faced by an undoubted further increase in the cost of living, due to the more and more effective application of the monopoly-principle in industry and the ever growing concentration in land-ownership. And there exists no party of importance that will honestly discuss, much less act upon, these premises. We shall therefore have an excellent opportunity to test the efficacy of government by evasion.

## THE TABOOS OF THE VICE AGENTS.

A FRIEND of mine has told me how the late Mr. Anthony Comstock used to visit her home when she was a little girl, and on these occasions he always had ready for her a little game which frightened her and made her dislike him intensely. It was his custom to carry on these visits a collapsible toy snake, which he would conceal in his hands, and spring in the child's face when she was not expecting it. The child's discomfiture used vastly to amuse Mr. Comstock, rousing him to boisterous laughter.

To those who understand these symbolisms this little joke of Mr. Comstock's will provide a startling illumination of that reformer's character and of the underlying motives which impelled him to take up the work he carried on so well, and which is now so ably performed by his successors, the Society for the Suppression of Vice. It may very well be that the agents of this society are aware of Mr. Comstock's playful habits, and that this knowledge on their part is responsible for the fact that Freud's "Leonardo da Vinci" can not at present be purchased in this country. For Freud in this volume describes and explains a similar game which afforded Leonardo great amusement: the artist attached the intestines of a pig to a concealed bellows, and inflated them suddenly before a roomful of guests, causing much amazement. To draw, on this meagre evidence, any parallel between the complexes which actuated Mr. Comstock and those which actuated Leonardo would of course be absurd, as well as libellous. But it is very clear that the rigorous suppression of all psychoanalytic literature should be one of the main endeavours of our vice-agents; not because this literature, even according to their own standards, is indecent, but chiefly because it tells these agents, and the world, if it cares to listen, exactly what is wrong with the psychic constitution of the vice-societies in general. These vice-agents, therefore, whether we may give them credit for this penetration or not, are acting in a manner unusually logical, for them, when they take action against the circulation of literature relating to analytic psychology.

That their other activities have not been logical is true, but this is also to have been expected. For the unconscious is not logical, as we know logic; rather it is guided by a curious logic of its own, which is apparent only after searching analysis. "Jürgen" and "Mademoiselle de Maupin" fall under the ban; while books which seem to the casual observer just as likely to be considered immoral by the society, such as George Moore's "Lewis Seymour and Some Women," H. K. Marks's "Peter Middleton," and, to go further back, the writings of Cellini, Boccaccio and the Restoration dramatists, are allowed to go unmolested. Yet this seemingly inexplicable selective process is in strict accordance with Puritanic tradition. Savonarola, we are told, cast into his fire "erotic poetry, both ancient and modern, impious books or those which tend to corrupt, Ovid, Propertius and Dante." One would seek a long while to find wherein the "New Life" and the "Divine Comedy," free of both the heretical and the pornographic, deserved condemnation along with the world's erotic poetry. Pope Alexander VI probably sensed something essentially unhealthy in Savonarola, and consigned him to the same doom that the books had met. It would have been well for lovers of art had this execution succeeded in stamping out Puritanism, but the more we understand Puritanism the more we know that it will never be stamped out.

Our only hope in regard to it is that some day legislation, perhaps under the guidance of psychiatrists, may come to recognize the neurotic quality of these manifestations, and prevent those who originate them from attaining even to the degree of power which is held to-day by the Society for the Suppression of Vice.

This power, fortunately, is considerably curtailed by the common sense of the average man; as was shown in the recent trial of "Mademoiselle de Maupin." The distinction between the average man and the professional smut-hound is not that the former has attained to any greater degree of freedom in his judgment on moral questions, but that he is not quite so much afraid of "immoral" books as is the latter. The average man is no casuist; he has very definite opinions as to what is moral and what is immoral, and it is safe to say that had any of the jurymen on this trial been asked, outside, his personal opinion as to the morality of "Mademoiselle de Maupin" he would undoubtedly have answered, "Hot stuff!" Yet all twelve of them voted against its suppression. It would seem that the riskiest of all criteria, common sense, is in such cases as this the safest court of appeals.

This is true because the average man, however primitive, prejudiced and unthinking he may be, is really psychically healthy, and such questions as these are decided not by intellect, but by psychic health or psychic disorder. The average man has few repressions, and what few he has are nicely taken care of symbolically in vaudeville shows, stag banquets, and that camaraderie which is part of modern business.

The professional vice-agent, on the other hand, is in a condition that very closely approaches the compulsion-neurosis, a mental state in which a constantly growing number of things, persons or actions becomes "taboo," to be avoided with scrupulous care, and in some cases to be destroyed. The selection of those things which are to be taboo is always fantastic on the surface, though governed by a strict unconscious logic. Thus, an acquaintance of mine, because of the repression of one very strong component of his personality, in other words a strong instinctive desire, acquired a delightfully picturesque form of this neurosis. Tobacco came to symbolize to him his repressed desire, and he acquired a phobia towards smoking. The taboo extended until he was unable to enter a room where smoking was going on. Finally he went to the country where nicotine was rare, and on those few occasions when he found it necessary to come to the city he wore in his nostrils specially constructed wire strainers whose purpose was to protect him from the feared nicotine. Students of psychoanalysis will find no difficulty in interpreting these symptoms; to interpret them here would bring this paper into the realm of the clinical. My sole purpose in mentioning this case is to show how the repression creates the taboo, and to what lengths an otherwise sane individual may be driven by a violent repression. My friend, had he been able, would have gladly stopped the sale of all tobacco, and put all smokers in prison.

The vice-agent is one who has made taboo those particular pieces of literature which stand symbolically to him for those components of his personality which he has repressed. And as most strong repressions originate in early childhood, in all probability he has never become conscious that he has made them. To the vice-agent his taboos have become so strong that they must not merely be avoided, but must be entirely removed from the world at any cost and in spite of all protestations on the part of others. It now becomes

clear why it is that he is able to read one "immoral" piece of literature, and, because it does not touch his particular repression, read it unmoved; while another, perhaps much less "immoral" according to his conscious standards, drives him into a frenzy of destruction.

The censorship of motion-pictures, though of less interest to lovers of art, is fruitful of material for psychological study. The censors invariably disagree among themselves; and there are cases in which each of a number of censors has selected a different scene in a motion-picture for condemnation, and is totally unable to understand why the others fail to agree with him. The rules of the various State censor-boards provide many curious examples of the unconscious logic of these repressions, and clearly demonstrate that the taboos are not governed by the consciously formulated "rationalizations" offered in explanation, but by the various repressed components of the individuals who prepare them; and as the components of no two individuals are exactly alike, we are prepared to expect that seeming lack of standardized selection that is apparent in all censorial activity.

As there will always be these repressions, until the newer education shall have been in force long enough to have destroyed them—which will be something more than a million years from now—the downfall of Puritanism does not appear as a matter of urgency. But it gives a certain satisfaction to those who suffer under these censorships to know that the oppressors are, in every action, betraying the deepest secrets of their lives to those who care to read them. Freud has said that from those who understand the new psychology no secret can be kept—"if it is not spoken with the lips or eyes, it will ooze from the finger-tips." Beyond a doubt, it is because this is true that Freudian literature is being suppressed.

PATRICK KEARNEY.

#### VIGNETTES OF CITY LIFE: V.

##### ALGY.

We were a care-free crowd that gathered every night for dinner at Hugo's table in a down-town restaurant, although most of us did not receive salaries which economically justified our patronage of that particular café, and there was Hugo's tip, beside. We would sooner have gone hungry than omitted Hugo's tip, though we were a little disturbed to find, upon the condemnation of land for the Pennsylvania terminal, that two houses on the site belonged to Hugo and were taken for \$30,000 each! At least it showed that patient waiters are no losers. Of that crowd—and it was almost twenty years ago that we began to lay the foundation of Hugo's fortune—all but one or two survive. Strange fates have befallen us. Our wit became a military expert in 1914, and after that devastating experience physician-in-general to the sick universe. Such is the effect of war on the sense of humour. Another of us, who used to swagger to the table with a pair of field-glasses rakishly hung from his shoulder (he reported the races), is now a playwright, and perhaps the only one who could still afford to eat at that particular restaurant. A third, our youngest member, who came to us direct from college, trailing clouds of glory and dripping quotations, is a radical; worse, he is one of the editors of an "intellectual weekly." I am a farmer, a potter amid flowers, a drifter down abandoned logging roads, who once tramped Broadway with the determination to conquer the metropolis. If this paper were to be about myself, I might confess that I fled to avoid being conquered by the metropolis; but it isn't to be about myself, so I need not make that admission.

No, this is going to be a story about Algy. Algy was an Englishman, born early enough in Victoria's reign to have been afflicted with Algernon as a name. His exact age, however, was uncertain, being at least sufficient to cause him to conceal it. His income considerably exceeded ours, perhaps because in addition to his job of reading

foreign copy on our paper, he was the correspondent of a London journal, perhaps because of some private source. At any rate, his small, narrow chest was habitually covered with a huge necktie of expensive Oriental silk, and he lived in an expensive bachelor apartment where the rooms were large and high of ceiling, and he could read, he said, before a fire of cannel coal. Algy was slow to wrath, in spite of a sarcastic tongue. I think we never saw him angry but once. That was when the new door-rugs appeared in the restaurant, each with the proprietor's initial in the centre, a large H. One of us suggested these were the H's Algy had dropped. Then he flushed with anger, he became almost apoplectic, the cigarette which habitually dangled from his mouth, the paper sticking to his lower lip in some mysterious fashion, bobbed up and down, scattering ashes over his Oriental tie, before he could find words to express his contempt of the insult. As a matter of fact, his speech in comparison with ours was a Matthew Arnold's "Culture and Anarchy" beside a tale by Ring Lardner. When he used slang, it was with a certain delicate unction, savouring just the peculiar situation in which it told at its full metaphorical suggestiveness. He was invariably companioned by a book, which, however, he was never seen to read, because so long as he was in the office there was always somebody to talk to when work was slack, and he preferred conversation.

He often held forth at considerable length about our American ignorance of English and European politics and social conditions, but it was extremely difficult to induce him to listen at equal length to any discussion of our politics and conditions, which he assumed to find transparently easy to understand, entirely to be grasped, in fact, by a reading of the morning paper. We used to tell him this was a typically English attitude, but perhaps it was merely human; one comes more and more to believe so as time goes on. At any rate, he could not be budged in it, and save for occasional trips to Washington for his London paper, Algy never stirred from New York, and in New York itself, lived entirely in and between his office and his apartment, with infrequent visits to the theatre and concert halls. Our days off spent in golf or tennis, our perspiring hour in the squash courts, before the afternoon assignments, our summer exodus to some beach near by where we could get a swim before coming in for work, he looked upon with smiling contempt. He had none of the traditional British love of sport in his frail body, regarding it as a waste of time and energy, or better, perhaps, as an absurd expenditure of effort, when one might sit comfortably and luxuriously still.

Nobody knew that Algy was writing a book. At length he published it, presumably at his own expense, and gave each one of us in the crowd a copy. It was beautifully printed on handlaid paper, tall and thin, with wide margins. He presented the copies with a studied carelessness, and affected boredom when we asked him to inscribe them. But we knew, somehow, that he was tremblingly sensitive to our verdicts. Naturally we all read it at once. It was philosophic art criticism, taking the reader from Olympus to Fujiyama, from Hellenistic to more modern Oriental achievement and ideals, and it was couched in a carefully wrought, ornate, cadenced prose which must have cost him hours upon long hours of labour, a prose suggestive of Pater at times, to be sure, but not without its passages of a haunting and lovely and strange individuality. Some of us liked it exceedingly, and he clove closer to us thereafter, with it seemed almost a touch of pathos in his efforts to conceal his regard under a mantle of sarcastic banter.

That nothing matters much in life but art, that the supreme moment of creation or appreciation is the flame point of existence, such appeared to be his creed, as it was the creed expressed in the famous "Conclusion" of his master. He held it literally enough, apparently, in the daily ordering of his ways, and in the production of his book, too, which, so far as I know, was never put on the market. Thereafter, I used to watch him at the copy desk, the thin spiral of cigarette smoke ascending into the inverted green shade of the dangling electric lamp, with a new interest, reflecting on the vast discrepancy that can exist between our economic lives and our spiritual lives.

He was at work on another book when death took his quaint little figure from our midst. It was his wish that the manuscript be burned unread. Most of us wrote, at home, on yellow copy paper purloined from the office. His manuscript was written on sheets of thick linen, cut from an ancient ledger he had secured at an auction. We found it

in the drawer of a desk, beneath a print by Hiroshige. We burned it before mysterious relatives appeared, of whom we had never heard; large, buxom, healthy people, in the shipping business, I believe.

WALTER PRICHARD EATON.

## ART.

### FIGURES AND FORCES OF WAR.

MANY a major artist has projected himself beyond the place and the hour and undergone his Gethsemane in an attempt to pierce, to seize and fix the incommensurable, the unfathomable of the great war. But the war was a planetary and historic phenomenon, a pivotal epoch. It spoke a language no poet had ever heard before. It spread itself upon canvases vast as continents, in colours far below and far above the chromatic scale of the average painter's palette.

Grey steel, red blood and orange flame no longer gave a traditional solution. Baffled, the painter saw even the outer aspects of war elude him by following the advice of the insolent old conqueror. They dived into the sea like fish; they burrowed into the earth like moles; they soared into the air like birds. All the elements they made their own, giving a new terror to fire, rarifying themselves even to gas, sublimating themselves into the powders of the chemist. Yet no new Goya has arisen, no Verestchagin. No Dürer, no Breughel the Elder, not even a Doré has come to interpret the visible and palpable monsters spawned by the mechanistic age. Art has been ground underfoot by the iron-shod hoofs of Behemoth.

Where is the allegory? What is the symbol? The key?

One master artist has found at least one answer in the simplest of human terms which are also the simplest of art—the naked human figure. He has torn through the tangle of the mechanical, has penetrated the clouds of the chemical, has freed himself from the obsession of the modern army of multitudes. He has once more reduced war to the elemental—the naked man and the naked weapon—the Hero and the Sword.

Alexander Schneider, best known as Sascha Schneider, is a master draughtsman, painter and sculptor famous throughout Central Europe for the heroic gesture of his art and for his impassioned evangel of beauty. He has already glorified with great breadth and power all that is left of the virile or the nobly tragic in modern life. Full of modern subtlety he has remained uncorroded by modern morbidity. With his pencil he has preached the creed of masculine beauty to the rising generation. His allegories of modern sport and athletics have invested these with a fresh Olympian grace. Thus Schneider approached the prodigious task with a certain priest-like devotion to stark truth and beauty. He approached it from the classic angle without sinking into the archaic, or the academic.

Twenty-four powerful and commanding drawings in crayon and charcoal gloom and lighten out of this handsome album in black and gold—"Figures of War and Forces of Death."<sup>1</sup> Here the human form becomes both the matter and the mirror of war, the Thing and the Idea. These sinewy and plastic drawings, these shapes of warriors, women and spectres, stalk, dance or crawl past our vision, enveloped with

a fateful twilight, luminous with the aura of death or shining in the nimbus of a heroism irradiant with swords.

These drawings are timeless. Yet they express with august beauty and irresistible force all the terror, ruin, exaltation, the despair, self-immolation and courage, the impotence in face of the immanent doom, the invisible force, the vacuous horror of modern war. And yet there is nothing neurasthenic or diseased in this art. Death, cowled and belaurelled and with flying tresses grinning eye to eye with the golden-helmeted stripling, is no longer *macabre*. He is no longer even hostile, but the concluding sum, the end-goal, the last abiding nakedness beyond the naked flesh and the naked steel. Had the Greeks not abhorred the skeleton Death, they would have given him some such majesty. Had the Mediævals not despised the body, they would have thrown it into some such beauty of juxtaposition with its own ultimate, and been free of the grotesque.

Schneider's drawings lie beyond the good and evil of war. Yet the series is bound to a plan, and this plan is carried out in an unfettered sequence that reflects the course of the great war. We are first confronted by a black Shape with stiff and rearing plumes over a huge casque, a broad spear and slant, phosphorescent eyes burning out of an iron visor. Its hands and feet are armoured, its front is hung horribly with human heads—"The War Spectre." Then follows the "Call to War," a youth standing in a tempest, his black hair blown to horizontal lines—his legs widely stemmed—a shattering blast rolls out of a long, redoubled apocalyptic horn. "Enthusiasm," a slender stripling with an ecstatic face waves a thin torch abloom with pale fire. "The Warrior," erect and at rest, the formidable fighting animal, his dark locks blown to the outline of an eagle's wings expanded, his muscular hands at rest upon the gleaming sword between his legs.

"The Flag," its bars traverse, bright and dark, significantly hiding the head of the bearer, the headless, the heedless one, the Patriot to whom its will is a flinty imperative duty, self-sacrifice—the flag-bearer as Flagellant. "Thoughts of Death," a bizarre and forced imagining—a young woman in panic flight, with two skulls embedded in and crowned with her own tresses. "The War Fury," a Gorgon-headed hag dancing amidst bituminous smoke-drifts, and swinging the heads of her victims like censers. "Defeat," a crippled sage, must be considered one of the failures of the collection, "Separation" and "Sorrow," too, are weak, or at least conventional interpretations.

Schneider's pencil has also sung a pæan to the concept of the Hero. Courage is celebrated in his shining, semi-divine form—here flesh gleams almost like the marble meant to render the hero immortal. "The Testing of the Sword" and the "Fighter" are full of Apollonian grace and danger. "The Onset" shows a lithe and powerful form plunging with tremendous momentum into a thick and livid bank of poison-mist. "The Hero" with steel-filleted brow and breast transfixes by a javelin, ascends serene and inert in an upheaval of light towards some Valhalla. "The Victor," stern and majestic as Michael the Archangel, vibrates with the irradiance of fame, and holds before him, like palms, two falchions of pale, streaming fire.

The shadows of doom and slaughter lie thick upon such plates as "The Struggle"—all the reasonless brutality and injustice of war cries out of the Lao-

<sup>1</sup> "Kriegergestalten und Todesgewalten." Leipzig and Berlin: Breitkopf and Härtel.

coön-like group of the "Warrior in the Clutch of the Overmght." "The Inexorable" is a cryptic and tortured composition, a brutal form perched upon another which it appears to be hollowing out with a great auger of flame, a symbol of human destiny under the relentlessness of War. "Death" reveals the Warrior transfigured, laurelled and clarified, framed in his narrow sarcophagus. And at the close there is "Peace"—that Peace that is the child of all wars, Peace the great minus-sign—a black-robed woman weeping, a naked lad with arms outstretched toward the great Unknown—the new generation, perhaps the new sacrifice, eternally recurrent.

Sascha Schneider has created no pictures. He has not attempted to illustrate the war, nor has he dealt in worn or bloodless allegories. He has incorporated for us in noble and exalted form the immediate soul of War, its monstrous essences, manifestations and emotions. An artist's eyes have looked upon the cataclysm of the peoples, the paroxysm of civilization—a civilization which is no longer the master but only the raw material of the forces it has engendered. In this morphology of war, an artist of uncommon vision has preserved all that deserves to survive in war—the heroic, the nobly tragic. These elements—like art which exalts and enshrines them—must not pass away, even though the nations go up like scraps of paper in the holocaust of humanity.

HERMAN GEORGE SCHEFFAUER.

## MISCELLANY.

**N**EWS YORK, on a Saturday afternoon in summer, presents an aspect recognizable only by the confirmed Manhattanite. There is something so quiet and subdued, so remote and withdrawn about it as to make a summer Sunday seem almost gay by comparison. For the New York Sunday—at least on the important streets—is unusual to behold; the pedestrians are obviously excursionists here for the day, and the motor-cars (and horse-drawn vehicles) suggest rural habitats. On a particular late July Saturday the street was beautifully still; it may have been imagination, but even the chauffeurs refrained from their incomprehensible habit of tooting. "Everybody" (as we love to say of the well-to-do two per cent) seemed to have gone to the country and the block was left to loneliness and me.

SUDDENLY the twanging of a guitar came to my ears, then a rich tenor voice singing in Italian. The melody was a simple one, but with long, sustained notes calculated to thwart unskilled interpreters. There was something plaintive about this voice, though without the affected sob that marks the Caruso imitators, and it was by no means without evidences of training. I went to the window and saw the singer moving laboriously, a wooden stump in place of one leg. He bent carefully to pick up coins; he nodded gratefully to the dignified flunkie from the nearby fashionable hotel who brought him money. From whom might these offerings come? I looked about. At the studio window were the shirt-sleeved artist and his wife; at a window in the shabby-genteel boarding-house opposite were three blonde children unconsciously posing like the popular Raphael angels; in a second-story window of the adjoining lodging-house, (a peg higher in the financial scale) stood a languid young woman with black, bobbed hair. After a moment she left to return with a cushion and a cigarette. The street had come to life!

THE tenor, responding to the silver and copper applause, sang another song to a quieter and more attentive audience than his overpaid confrères get at the Metropolitan. Then he stumped away and, after a minute or

two, I heard his voice faintly from around the corner. Again I looked up, preparatory to retreating from the window to resume my reading-glasses. Gone, bobbed-hair; gone, the artist and his Saskia; gone Raphael's angels. Nothing remained but a distant, quavering *sostenuto*. New York on a Saturday afternoon in summer.

**S**HADES of the Cardiff Giant! In Barnum's day people wanted to be humbugged with imagination and skill. Are we growing naïve, or are we merely dull, to allow the Associated Press to put over the story of the discovery of the "Mayflower's" hull? True, the English-Speaking Union, whose chairman claims the discovery and "will reveal details of the secret at a conference to be held at Plymouth in September," had to do something in this tercentenary year to cement the bonds, etc., but is this the best he could do? Even at press-rates it costs the price of a few good dinners to cable this kind of mush:

The old timbers, including oaken beams supporting the roof, found in a barn adjoining an inn called Old Jordan's Hotel, at Chalfont St. Giles, Buckinghamshire, are considered by Dr. Harris to have originally formed part of the hull and deck of the 'Mayflower.' Some of the beams, which are worn and worm-eaten, bear marks indicating they might formerly have held ship's rivets and tackle.

There is a local theory, the paper continues, that a Quaker formerly lived in the neighbourhood who was a professional ship breaker, selling ship timbers to farmers of the surrounding country. It has been suggested that he broke up the 'Mayflower' and sold the timbers to the owner of Old Jordan's Hotel. No proof beyond this vague tradition is offered by the *Mail*.

As Mark Twain said, in "Innocents Abroad," when shown a letter written by Christopher Columbus, "Why, we have thirteen-year-old boys in America who can write a better hand than that."

OUR amateur Freudians would be happy to-day, if they were in Paris! The latest murder to interest that frolicsome capital is that by Mme. Bessarabo, the novelist and playwright, who is alleged to have shot her husband, then packed his body in a trunk, and shipped the trunk to Nancy. Where the peculiar psycho-analytic interest comes in is just in this: the *Petit Parisien*, with characteristic literary enterprise, has discovered that in the published autobiography of Hera Mirtel (her pen name), she describes herself, to quote the cables, "as a woman who, starting on her wedding-journey, discovered that she did not know how to pack a trunk"! Now if that is not a symbolic disability, was there ever one? Is it not clear that her instinctive awkwardness in what is generally supposed to be a peculiarly feminine technique, foreshadows the horror that must have overwhelmed her when she packed her dead husband's body in its improvised and temporary coffin? The Paris newspapers are much exercised over this point, and are thinking of repressing their anti-Austrian sentiment long enough to send to Vienna and procure Dr. Freud himself for the case. More space is devoted in the newspaper to this versatile authoress than to the Bolsheviks or the treaty. Even Landru, who is charged with killing eleven of the women he was engaged to (for over a year the authorities have been trying to find the bones of one of them) is asked his opinion on the case, interest in which now even exceeds the former interest in his own. One of the Paris newspapers quotes him as saying, "My God, I was lucky not to have picked that woman as a fiancée." Finally, a note is published in the press, written by the accused woman in her cell: "I am not a woman who kills. All my past protests with vigour against such an accusation. I am Hera Mirtel, and all my work shows in luminous proof that as a creatress I could not destroy." How gay and debonair the whole thing seems beside our own rather sordid Elwell case! A pink silk kimono, a toupée and a set of false teeth seem poor and unexhilarating accessories indeed, beside this excessively lavish outlay.

JOURNEYMAN.

## POETRY.

## BURIAL.

He that desired the coloured world and laughter,  
Here on this summer day,  
Bury him in this golden field, and after,  
Go away.

And vex him not with priest and incantation,  
Let no vain prayers be said.  
Shall he that loved wild earth, with such oblation  
Be comforted?

He rests amid the gorgeous growth of flowers,  
Amid the shadowy trees,  
Clear sky and dark—gray rain and blowing hours:  
He loved all these.

Weep not but go; what need has he of weeping?  
The poems that he made are all one song,  
Earth he found good, and life, and death's but sleeping  
A little long.

Now he is one with wind and laughing river,  
Companion to the sun,  
The grasses have him close, that gloom and shiver  
Where warm winds run.

Then in this plot of nodding daisies leave him;  
What more has life to give than laughter and sleep?  
In silence go; I think that we should grieve him  
Even to weep.

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

## HERE IS MODERNIST CRITICISM.

SIRS: During the past winter I have been looking at pictures, exhibitions of contemporary American painting, principally by Boston and New England painters. I have wasted hours in galleries, walked miles and looked at perhaps thousands of pictures in quest of that rarity, genius; and—what? I have not seen half a dozen pictures I would care to own, and not one I would agree to hang in my house five years! Rarely did I look at a picture which produced the slightest emotional reaction; so shallow and superficial was the work, I was able to exhaust it in one seeing. Even the few pictures I liked, one or two of Pennoyer's, Maurice Sterne's hollyhocks and sweet-williams, some of Childe Hassam's watercolours, the Italian Carlandi's Roman scenes and Sargent's Lake Ohara were not in any real sense creative, but pictures where the sheer loveliness of wondrous colour enraptured, filling me with a desire ceaselessly to saturate myself with it.

Even the work of Jonas Lie, perhaps the most markedly capable man in the lot, has practically faded from mind in less than a month; and yet his subjects are our immediate life, the city and industry. Painted with verve they have a tremendous vigour, a marked quality of genius, they flash with colour; and reveal a fine sense of the breadth and depth of things. To say the least they are the work of a man alive and with a feeling for life, whereas most work appears to have been done by automata. Still it seemed pictorial work rather than interpretative, and I can not get away from the thought that in his work, Lie has omitted the one thing of consequence in the whole spectacle of life; man himself. Left out, or so subordinated as to be virtually ignored, Lie at best makes man insignificant as compared to his work; and in this I feel that he is essentially wrong, that neither external nature herself, nor man's creations are the big thing, but that the biggest, most important, most obvious and interesting thing in creation is man himself.

If the paintings I have seen this winter are representative of contemporary American work, then I conclude that it is a failure, for the reason that it is not creative in any high sense, but mainly a vapid dilettantism and pandering to the dictating of an art-public. What I noticed particularly was the lack of individuality in the work. It was mechanical and

repetitive; sometimes one would see a whole collection by a single painter where the different pictures were as much alike as a lot of buttons. It was exhausting to look at most of this work once; it left one bored and fatigued. It was as though the artist merely set up his easel and tried to copy everything in front of him. The result is, the work being devoid of emotion, that the pictures are strikingly alike in that they are photographic, abounding in tiresome and meaningless detail. They are the perfection of that supreme artistic futility, technique. Being intellectual, one picture is essentially like another and one man's work like another's. All the individuality of man expresses itself in the emotional side of his life, and it is because most of these painters reveal no deep feeling for a subject that they have failed.

There is erring on the other side; one of the man whose impressionism loses all form in a vague blur and the other of him whose work reveals a crudity, over-simplification and lifelessness, which to my mind is not progress, but merely an intellectual variation on French impressionism. Among the younger generation there is frequent mistaking of the bizarre for the original; but this error could not occur did the artist try to express his soul irrespective of what others have done. It does not at all follow that because the work of Manet, Renoir, Cézanne, Gauguin or Rodin was unpopular, that anything now unpopular must be as great as that of the Frenchmen. No man following his feeling and trying wholeheartedly to express himself, could fall into the errors some of these interesting younger artists are committing.

Some of the best things I saw this winter were the etchings of Pennell. What a relief it was to turn from wearying landscapes, endlessly drawn cathedrals, Beacon Streets, meaningless portraits, and all the rest of the subjects "beautiful," or "proper to art," to a good old railway station with locomotives belching columns of smoke, and the massy crowds hurrying in and out, to a factory, a sky-scraper, or congested city street, or something else vital and pleasant with the joy of the homey and familiar. Life is the only proper subject for art, the whole of it, and these things are not only part of our life but a large part of it; just now the most vibrant and entralling part of it. Ours is an industrial civilization, but most painters seem waiting to be told of it.

The pity of the situation is that so much talent should be friveling itself away in these vapidities. I do not grasp just what is the reason for this. Perhaps it is the influence of dealers, perhaps the fatuous praise of newspaper and magazine critics, perhaps the influence of people who have a certain amount of money to spend each year for paintings and other things conventional to their lives, and that such people conceive pictures to be just empty adornments for their stupid lives, or perhaps it is the less remediable reason—lack of genius. This latter is as hard to determine as genius, is just as subject to its environment, and the most favourable aid to its best performance is a public which is capable of encouraging and appreciating its most individual and personal work. Howbeit, the fact is, no matter what other virtues they may exhibit, American painters seemingly are not creative, and in lacking this fundamental quality they lack the one thing which justifies and makes any artistic work truly worth doing. I am, etc.,  
Marblehead, Mass.

WALTER C. HUNTER.

## THE BLESSINGS OF BEING GOVERNED.

SIRS:

See heathen nations bending  
Before the God we love  
And thousand hearts ascending  
In gratitude above.

Vancouver, B. C., is inhabited by colonial imperialists; they have no sense of humour. The editorial department of the New York Tribune is inhabited by an American variant of the same species. But somewhere on the staff lurks an editor with a sense of humour, who on Monday, 14 June, got considerable entertainment out of the Vancouver Sun. The Tribune man furnished the misleading caption:

New Guinea bars wearing of clothes; jail for offenders; natives must confine garb to loin cloth of calico, or go to prison if unable to pay fine of two dollars and fifty cents.

The Tribune editor then plunged into the following facts from his Vancouver contemporary:

Bishop G. Sharpe has arrived in Vancouver on his way to London to attend a conference of bishops of the Church of England. 'The Anglican Church has always frowned upon the adoption of European clothing by the natives,' said Bishop Sharpe. 'We don't think it good for the natives to attire themselves in our style of raiment; they are not used to it. We've always discouraged it, and now the British Government has taken up the matter and enacted a law against it.'

Whereupon the right reverend gentleman goes on to boast that there are no labour-troubles in New Guinea and that plenty of workers are eager to sign up for several years for the sum of thirty dollars a year. "In order," says the good bishop, "to encourage industry, and incidentally add to the revenue, the Government now imposes on each male native over sixteen years a poll-tax of five dollars, and also a fine of two dollars and fifty cents for wearing European clothes." In other words, out of a yearly income of twenty-five dollars, after the British Government has levied its tribute, an additional tenth is removed from any native brash enough to step into European trousers. The bishop further states that the natives are "quite amenable, and when taken in hand by the mission prove good workmen." All this is exceedingly good news and only serves to augment our faith in the power of missions.

The blessings of the gospel must be obvious to the most sceptical. Imagine one of these Guinea men, with a net income of twenty-five dollars yearly, turned loose by a thoughtless Government and allowed to purchase European clothes. Somehow we feel certain that these benighted heathen have often listened to sermons preached from the text, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." The British admit that they are the greatest governing race on earth. Now if our Government at Washington were only intelligent enough to borrow their good ideas, and insist that each labouring-man wear only four calico loin-cloths a year, salt might at last be shaken on the tail of the High Cost of Living. One is curious to know, too, how much Manchester taxes the heathen for his four loin-cloths. I am, etc.,

MOLLIE BEST.

Caldwell, New Jersey.

## ORIENTAL INSIGHT.

SIRS: I have just read something that seems to me so exceedingly funny that I can't help thinking you might like to comment on it editorially; that is, if you do quote from the papers:

Mr. Balfour once tried to find out what Emir Feisal thought of the British Government. He succeeded. "It reminds me of a caravan in the desert. You see an impressive string of dromedaries in the distance, trekking single file across the shifting sands. When you first overtake them, you observe that the last camel is tied to the tail of the next in line. When you reach the head of the column, you find that a little donkey is leading the whole string."

You will find it (together with two other sayings almost as good) on p. 672 of the August number of *Asia*. I am, etc.,

E. S.

## ÆSTHETICS ON LONG ISLAND.

SIRS: "The Huntington idea"—the phrase is Mr. William McAdoo's and it is to be hoped that its import may become nation-wide. It is not the name of a new party or a campaign call but something far more significant. Mr. McAdoo used it several times in his speech to the happy crowd at Huntington, Long Island, on 10 July, at the dedication of Mr. August Heckscher's gift, or rather gifts, to the town of an athletic field, a park, and an art gallery. Fields and parks are common enough but an art gallery and an exquisite one, not waiting to be filled but already hung with pictures, is the Huntington idea which one hopes may spread to every community in our country. Here is a suburban gallery well worth a pilgrimage; visitors to New York must henceforth not fail to include it in their quest of art in the same way that visitors to London invariably include the journey to Dulwich.

Dulwich has a close association with Shakespeare, but how much more closely the Huntington gallery may be linked with Walt Whitman, whose birth-place is but a few miles away! There are niches yet to be filled in the gallery. Surely Whitman must have one, and some other memorial consistent with the beautiful building and its beautiful setting. Neither Mr. Heckscher nor Mr. McAdoo mentioned the Huntingtonian who is himself an idea and the greatest one America has produced. This omission was the one drawback to what otherwise would have been one of the happiest of occasions. I feel more than sure that the originator and the beneficiaries of the Huntington idea will wish in some way to make up for it. I am, etc.,

ELLEN FITZGERALD.

Chicago.

## BOOKS.

## A NONCONFORMIST CONQUEROR.

MR. P. W. WILSON of the London *Daily News* has just contributed his share to the Anglo-Irish controversy, in a diverting tone, modestly entitled "The Irish Case Before the Court of Public Opinion."<sup>1</sup> The jacket is adorned by a picture of a sinister Teuton who has twisted the Lion's tail into a knot marked "Irish Question," and the publishers cheerfully assert that Mr. Wilson has here presented "a practically unanswerable case" to the citizens of the United States who "are today self-constituted into a jury of one hundred million persons, sitting in solemn judgment on the great case of Ireland versus England." There is a hint of reproach in this use of "self-constituted," and perhaps an intention of suggesting that Mr. P. Whitwell Wilson is not a "self-constituted" advocate, but has some greater authority for presuming to intervene in the debate. It may well be that his book owes its existence to some authority other than his own desire to constitute himself the champion of England's remarkable virtues. It would be rash, however, to assume that his statements have thereby acquired a degree of reliability which could not be expected from the presumably irresponsible members of that self-constituted jury.

It is almost unbelievable that any competent journalist who undertakes to discuss Sinn Fein should be still ignorant of the meaning of those two words, yet that is the plight of Mr. Wilson, and his offence is aggravated by his tiresome rehash of all the jibes based upon the stupid fiction that Sinn Fein means "ourselves alone." Since he has not yet discovered the meaning of two simple words now universally familiar to every newspaper reader, it is not surprising that his references to the financial relations of Ireland and England teem with incredible misstatements. Quoting, for example, the figures for the financial year ending March, 1914, Mr. Wilson asserts that "as a country defended free of charge to her taxpayers, Ireland was unique." But, as a British Government Commission reported in 1896 that Ireland had been overtaxed from the year 1800 to the extent of at least £2,750,000 yearly, and as that yearly overtaxation has increased many times since the date of the Financial Relations Commission's report, Ireland can hardly be expected to share Mr. Wilson's ingenuous admiration for that "free gift to an unfree people," to paraphrase the Liberal scriptures. When Old England entered the war for the liberation of small nations she extracted from Irish taxpayers between 1915 and 1919 the tidy sum of £62,552,500, over and above the normal taxation which should be paid by a country with Ireland's resources. This increased war revenue was spent on munitions made exclusively in British factories, and helped to provide the tanks, machine-guns, and bombs which have been so useful in keeping Irish liberty within strictly reasonable bounds. Mr. Wilson is moved to honest wonder at the moral grandeur of England's sacrifices for Ireland. British financial experts may agree that the taxation of Ireland has been excessive for the past one hundred and nineteen years, but his conscience rebels against such official statistics, although arrived at by investigators with no Irish affiliations, and based upon the official accounts which are carefully prepared and controlled by the British Treasury. But, says Mr. Wilson, if the revenue from Ireland has increased, local expenditure in Ireland has equally increased. But he conveniently overlooks the nature of that expenditure. In 1916 the revenue from Ireland was £17,929,000; the local expenditure £12,597,000. In 1919 the revenue rose to £37,275,000, but the amount spent in Ireland was £13,537,000. At all times the amount charged as Irish expenditure has included the cost of maintaining the governmental machinery, military and civil, for holding Ireland under English rule.

<sup>1</sup> "The Irish Case Before the Court of Public Opinion." P. W. Wilson. New York: Fleming H. Revell Co.

While Mr. P. W. Wilson marvels at the generosity of his government, and denies the existence of financial and economic injustice to Ireland under its administration, a host of inconvenient facts remain. Before the Union, taxation in Ireland amounted to 9s. 8d. per head, while in England in the same year it was £5. 7s. per head, by amalgamating the two exchequers Ireland was saddled with England's debts, so that between 1819 and 1919 the amount of revenue per head paid by the two countries shows an increase of 1004 per cent for Ireland as against 418 per cent for England. During those years the population of Britain has increased nearly 150 per cent while that of Ireland has declined by half. Ireland is the only European country whose population has declined in the seventy years from 1840 to 1911, yet the Irish birth-rate is the highest in Europe, except that of Holland.

To realize what these figures involve for Ireland it is necessary to glance at the population, area and revenue of such countries in Europe as are deprived of the disinterested assistance of the British government, which, Mr. Wilson says, has done so much for Ireland that he would prefer to be taxed as an Irishman in Ireland rather than in New York. Ireland is larger than Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Switzerland, and has a larger population than Norway, Denmark and Switzerland. The revenue figures for Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, Switzerland, Denmark and Norway in 1913 were in every case less than the amount paid in that year by Ireland to England. The price of liberty for Switzerland worked out at twenty shillings per head, while the blessing of British government cost Ireland 209 shillings per head. The independent small nations of Europe, in other words, carried on their entire administration, including military, naval and diplomatic charges, for less than is extracted from Ireland as the price of subjection. Mr. Wilson apparently has never had time to reflect upon the contrast between what those nations got for revenues varying from one-third to two-thirds of Ireland's tribute to the country which he describes as a benefactor. But his interpretation of economic data is peculiar, for he actually speaks of "Ulster's" (i. e., the north east corner) opposition to Sinn Fein as representing the opinion of the prosperous, industrial portion of Ireland. In the first place, only four counties in Ulster, out of nine, have a Unionist majority. In the second, the statistics of Ulster "prosperity" indicate that in the North as elsewhere the population is dwindling. Moreover, the rateable valuation of Ulster is seventy-nine per cent of the valuation per head of Leinster, and two per cent less than the average for all Ireland. Mr. Wilson mistakes the wealth of the capitalist oligarchy in Belfast for the prosperity of an entire province.

Mr. Wilson has no scruples in asserting that the Lloyd George Convention of 1917 failed because Irishmen can not agree amongst themselves. He does not state that it was a hand picked assembly, in which eighty-three members out of 101 were nominated, not by Ireland, but by England. Only ten seats were offered to Labour and Sinn Fein, although they represented eighty per cent of the Irish people. The terms of reference were limited to what England might possibly grant instead of what Ireland wanted. As Sir Horace Plunkett has explained, as soon as it looked as if the convention would come to an agreement in spite of the British undertaking that Ulster should not be bound by any of its findings, Lloyd George wrote a letter to the chairman taking out of the control of the proposed Irish parliament the powers vital to its success. Such is now the familiar history of the political swindle designed, as the Lord Chancellor of England said, "to keep Ireland talking until America came into the war." The innocent Mr. P. W. Wilson seems to be as ignorant of that now notorious incident as he is of the meaning of the words Sinn Fein. In fact, his innocence is sublime. He believes that Irish unity can only be maintained by England, and never explains that the dissentient minority, which opposes Irish free-

dom with the help of English supporters, is less than any similar minority in Europe. If one-fifth of the Irish people have the right of veto over the remaining four-fifths, then the principle of self-determination becomes a fantastic joke.

Mr. Wilson's effort is a remarkable exhibit in the case of Ireland against England. When a reputable journalist can put his name to such a compilation there is evidently little to be said in favour of his clients. When, as in this case, the whole work is smeared over with a peculiar evangelical unction, it supplies a clue to the Non-conformist complex. Mr. Wilson voices the prejudices and ignorant fears of the average Protestant bourgeois in Britain, whose virtuous concern for liberty everywhere except where England rules, is tinged with a deep-seated hatred of Ireland, rebellious and Catholic, obviously designed by the God of Cromwell for exploitation by the sturdy puritan. When all his precious statistics have been swept aside, his cheap appeals to anti-German feeling, and his self-complacent sense of England's magnanimity in holding down Ireland by sheer force, there remain the two fundamental obstacles to a real understanding between the two countries. Every Englishman at heart is convinced that Ireland is an integral part of Britain, and the mass of anonymous Protestants is secretly bemused by the thought of the Roman bogey.

ERNEST A. BOYD.

#### MR. PINSKI'S PLAYS.

A STRANGE talent is David Pinski's, and in one way at least, an unfortunate one. The many virtue's and originalities which may be traced to his Jewish heritage are often obscured by the fact that he writes in Yiddish. There are few of his "Ten Plays"<sup>1</sup> which can wholly escape the murkiness of inferior translation. "The Phonograph," the comedy of a Jew who brings the sharp and pushing business methods of America back to the Russian Pale is one example in point. One or two of the war-plays are meaty enough to survive almost any sort of translation. Indeed the chief difference between Pinski's powerful dramatic picture of refugees from a pogrom, "Poland—1919," and Maeterlinck's "Les Aveugles" is that the Jew's terrible and dexterous orchestration of the voices of human misery so grips and holds one that no translator could break the spell. Aside from "Poland—1919," the most significant of these playlets would require a verbal genius to convey in English the mental genius of their conception. A few of them stand in all the more need of this because their material is so slight. "The Cripples," a short sketch in which four beggars, including a disabled workman and a wounded soldier, squabble for a vantage point on the church steps, only ironically to suggest to the sexton the idea of renting out the begging privilege, reads rather like a playlet in the *Liberator*. There is unquestionable dexterity in "Diplomacy," Pinski's satire on the various factors in modern society that make for war, but "The Inventor and the King's Daughter" is an abler piece of satire. It pierces through to more fundamental matters. There is some fine drama in it, and a physical picturesqueness richer than that of "Diplomacy." "The God of the Newly Rich Wool Merchant" is united with these two other plays through Pinski's evident interest in the possibilities of style in theatrical production, as well as through its satire on the fundamentals of society. In this case Pinski makes a rich Jew of to-day express in a sort of Dionysiac dance his devotion to the woollen deity that has blessed him with prosperity. Pinski calls in the rich man's relatives and neighbours to attend the celebration, and the result is a bizarre tragicomedy which demands an extraordinary nicety of expression. Isaac Goldberg's translation is by no means awkward or inept; but the verbal skill of a Dunsany is quite as essential to most of these odd and imaginative plays as is the beauty of such a style to the last playlet in the book, a Talmudic study entitled, "The Stranger."

<sup>1</sup>"Ten Plays." David Pinski. New York: B. W. Huebsch.

Undoubtedly Pinski's Yiddish is almost as fine and expressive, or his strange plays would never have won the fame that is theirs. He suffers in English, however, as Dunsany would suffer if he wrote in Gaelic and had to endure translation at the hands of a journalist of less than extraordinary skill. There is a line of Dunsany's which runs: "I would I were swimming down the Gishon on the cool side under the fruit trees." If it had been Pinski's, we should expect to find it translated in some such form as this: "I wish I were swimming beneath the orchard on the side of the Gishon that is cool." Imagine the mental task of trying to reconstruct from such a line the "Gaelic original"! That is the task of a reader of Pinski's "Ten Plays." Fortunately, it has its rewards.

K. M.

#### A DILAPIDATED SCARECROW.

THERE is sound good sense in Mr. Owen Wister's plea that Americans forget to be self-righteous in judging England; after all it is a trifle absurd for us to call her a land-grabber with our own treatment of the native Indians and Mexicans a matter of historical record, and with our petty South American imperialisms to mock all our fine pretensions about self-determination. There is also sound good sense in his plea that we should remember that, except for a few misunderstandings—such as during the Civil War and the war of 1812, England has generally stood on our side in international quarrels, not, as Mr. Wister himself is careful to point out, because she loved us more, but because she loved other nations less. Yet in saying this much about Mr. Wister's new book, "A Straight Deal or The Ancient Grudge,"<sup>1</sup> one has said about all that can be said in favour of it. And even these two very sensible observations of Mr. Wister's are irrelevant to the central problem—the problem of how an Anglo-American war, the likelihood of which is treated all too frivolously by contemporary journalism, can be avoided.

It is quite true we have nothing to be particularly self-complacent about when we compare ourselves with England; in fact, when we survey the domestic scene in both countries to-day the balance in favour of a tolerable civilization inclines sharply towards England. The vivid realization of this unpleasant truth does not, however, help matters a particle. However much intelligent people in both countries may understand their own nation's defects and however much the late war may have created a bond of sympathy between snobbish Americans—like the author of this book, and upper-class Englishmen—the common people of England and the United States remain densely ignorant of each other. The contacts of the late war did nothing to improve their comprehension; Mr. Wister himself must be acutely aware of this, otherwise he would not have written this hysterical and rather silly book. In a word, the great majority of the populations of both countries still remains exploitable material for war, and the fondness of Mr. Wister for English manners and the admiration of the New York *Times* for the mentality of Lord Curzon will have no more ultimate effect on the course of events than the amenities exchanged between the Kaiser and the late King Edward during their friendly visits before the war had on Anglo-German relations.

England to-day is an expanded imperialism, and in the nature of things we have become a rapidly expanding one. Unless imperialism is killed at its source in both countries, a conflict of interests must inevitably develop, and our common language and common traditions, upon which Mr. Wister lays so much sentimental emphasis, will only serve to give that conflict fratricidal fury. Confronted with this situation, the author's counsel is worse than negative. It is well enough to ask us to bury the hatchet, but supposing the hatchet refuses to stay buried? It is well enough to ask us to condone England's actions toward Ireland and to sing the praises of Ulster, but sup-

posing civil war develops within the British Empire over the Irish question? It may be granted that we are perfectly willing on both sides to let the past bury its dead, but events are developing inexorably in spite of all this fine display of goodwill, and we in this country will sooner or later be forced, whether we like it or not, to adopt a definite policy towards them. We can not neglect the facts of British imperialism any more than we can neglect the facts of our own. It is not that Mr. Wister neglects these facts, it is merely that he has nothing to suggest—or rather that he has only one thing to suggest, and that suggestion is pitifully childish. He implies that perpetual fear and perpetual hatred of Germany should forever bind the people of the United States to the people of the British Empire, and that whatever differences might develop between us should be composed in the face of the common enemy.

To put it bluntly, Mr. Wister has far to go before he recovers from the panic psychology of the war, and British Tories could ask for no better propagandist than this honest and simple soul who seems still to regard the threat of the spread of German *Kultur* as the supreme menace to the civilized world. For the myth of the rampant German devil is well understood by English imperialists, even if it is not by Mr. Wister, as a first-class dust-raiser to hide unpleasant things going on in India, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Ireland, and other sections of the globe where the benevolent authority of the British Colonial Office holds sway. Mr. Wister is the victim of economic innocence and of a sincere admiration, which does him credit, for English civilization. But the world of modern imperialism, modern labour, modern industrial exploitation seems to exist for him scarcely more realistically than for the youngster at Eton thinking only of boating and cricket. His book is a painful confirmation of the growing suspicion that in the interests of international peace the instinctively academic literary mind should be forbidden to express itself on political matters on pain of the immediate destruction of all it has ever written.

H. S.

#### UNDER THE MICROSCOPE.

In his study of Jane Austen and her works,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Firkins has examined his subject much as a careful craftsman in leather might examine a fine glove, turning it inside out to study the stitching and seams, observing the pattern and cut, and finally smoothing the whole into its rightful shape and remarking its special style. His approach is made through a detailed and technical consideration of the novels, and as his meticulous criticism goes over them, one by one, bit by small bit, his method occasionally seems that of turning them wrong side out rather than inside out. Through whole passages one is made acutely aware of small triumphs of joinery and slips in the sewing; larger outlines are not apparent. But the advantage of this microscopic, literal measurement is that it prepares the way for an exact delineation of Jane Austen's production and character. Her incomparability is passed by, and the legacy of her novels and letters with their residuary portrait of herself is taken closely and at first hand. If the final picture lacks an inconsequent sureness, it is full of fine perspectives and fresh values. Jane Austen appears somewhat unexpectedly as conventional, and her conventionalism was a restriction. Mr. Firkins can speak of the "quiet finality of her acceptance of current restraints that made Jane Austen's moral life at the same time impeccable and vacant." Vacancy hardly seems expressive for so compact a mind, but Jane certainly accepted usual standards; she was unquestionably more interested in quirks and turns of conduct than in depths of motive. Moral or spiritual struggles apparently did not attach her interest; and she was not open to the strongest feelings. Even in the development of her great theme of courtship she always neatly evaded handling scenes expressive of passion; Mr. Firkins cites instance after instance. Yet she was vigorous within the limited range of her minor emo-

<sup>1</sup> "A Straight Deal, or The Ancient Grudge." Owen Wister. New York: The Macmillan Company.

<sup>1</sup> "Jane Austen." O. W. Firkins. New York: Henry Holt and Co.

tions; and her critic gives full and discriminating value to the sprightly love of truth which existed at the core of her temperament, a love which was tolerant, took itself easily, was trim and gay. She was wisely and comfortably confined within her limitations, her acceptances were countered by her humour, her lack of idealism by her good sense.

A curious fact upon which Mr. Firkins dwells is that Jane Austen failed to use or used scantly certain powers which she indubitably had. Her affection for her sister Cassandra was probably the moving feeling of her life; but, as Mr. Firkins discerningly indicates, this feeling found nothing like a complete expression in the portrayal of the subordinated loves of Jane and Elizabeth, Elinor and Marianne. These sisterly affections are touched lightly. And in smaller but essential matters Jane is shown to have missed rich opportunities which she could easily have fulfilled. She had for instance a gift for concrete and homely observation which comes out again and again in her letters. She enjoyed good food; her enjoyment had real gusto. She particularizes with zest. She was also interested in dress, and was not indifferent to fashion. Circumstantialities on such matters as these would have given an enlivening colour to her portrayals of family life, and would have brought her as an artist abreast of much later writers. But she quite omits them all. Even her undoubted gift for simple speech often deserts her when she is setting down the conversation of her characters; they are made to use elegant literary periods, and her narrative style can also take on the stilts of the earlier essay. None of these lapses or unfulfilments seem the result of any sort of inhibition. Jane Austen's mind was free and natural; her material apparently came to her readily and shaped itself without marked effort. Perhaps a mind as easy as Jane Austen's always fails to bring to the surface its full matter. If it is fluent it is also docile, and it follows usual currents. Docility along with strength is emphasized in Mr. Firkins's analysis. Again it seems a fundamental trait of Jane Austen's mind, is spite of her vivacity, in spite of her cool irony. She was in the main what Clive Bell calls a traditional writer. She perfected and enhanced rather than initiated, taking up a lead which had already been opened by Fanny Burney; and in her novels, fine as she is, she did not quite attain her full stature. The complete and variable Jane Austen, the amply drawn, living Jane Austen of Mr. Firkins's study, could hardly exist except for the letters.

CONSTANCE MAYFIELD ROURKE.

#### SHORTER NOTICES.

SHEILA KAYE-SMITH's place in English letters since "Sussex Gorse" and "The Four Roads" has been peculiar. She has been visualized as a sort of female Thomas Hardy, an ironist dealing with elementals, making no compromises with the romanticism of the day. Yet her new book "Tamarisk Town"<sup>1</sup> merely deepens the impression that she is a romanticist at heart. The figure of Moneypenny of Marlingate is unforgettable not because of an undeviating devotion to the essential realities but because of a *grande passion* that destroys not him alone, but a whole community. Moneypenny is a builder, a visionary, whose one desire is to change the sleepy fishing-town of Marlingate into a "select watering-place." Practically every paragraph in the book leads to the definition of Moneypenny. The author expends all her powers of visualization in developing a figure who is something more than a type; Moneypenny is a creation that becomes memorable. He becomes a battle-field for conflicting forces. Opposed to his dream of the vast development of his community is Morgan Wells. She is Morgan le Fay weaving her forest-spells about a man who resolutely attempts to put romance outside his life. The increasing struggle between Marlingate, the town, and Morgan, the woman, for possession of the heart and soul of Moneypenny becomes almost epic. The conflict proves to be disastrous for Morgan until the secret comes to her in the moment of apparent defeat. Living, she may not claim the man she loves, but dead she will always stand between him and his dream. It was a daring

feat for a novelist to kill off her heroine in the middle of the story, but Miss Kaye-Smith is vindicated by the result. Morgan lives on as vitally for the reader as for Moneypenny. Slowly his dream turns to a nightmare. He comes to hate Marlingate because of the drowned figure that forever stands beside him. The last chapters tell of a vast undoing, the destruction of a community, steadily, remorselessly. The book is a compact, well-rounded piece of work. It intimates a vastness that is never definitely asserted.

H. S. G.

It seems to be a question whether American college life can furnish material for the novel of parts. There are of course the many humoristic exaltations of the undergraduate and his point of view, and occasionally a bit of muck-raking is done; but the novel which seriously chooses the life of the college student for its own sake and is both within and beyond it has somehow not been written. Perhaps in this country the collegiate is still too generalized and incoherent to provide substance for a story. Possibly the enduring background of the academic is too grey. Yet after all even the academic makes a few pennyweights of that curious compound called life, and the large fact remains that college years are a section of youth; it ought to be possible to make them significant. Through the opening chapters of "Bertram Cope's Year,"<sup>1</sup> Mr. Fuller cuts down to a single aspect of this unformulated mass of experience and cuts rather deeply. His scene is most promising: a small freshwater college with a groundwork of pseudo-artistic, semi-academic life in the town. Bertram Cope is a graduate student of a type which ought to be added to the gallery of truthful American portraits, with his resonant voice and "priceless profile," his knack of drifting with the current and quite neatly extricating himself from its dangers, his capacity for fulfilling standard requirements. Mr. Fuller has, too, a real theme, in the power of youth, simply as dashing youth, to inspire an attraction in the languid, the wistful, the outworn, with consequences which may be comic or pathetic or even grotesque. But "Bertram Cope's Year" rather quickly fails of its effect. The makings of a real story are there, but the story does not emerge, and its people become less and less distinct. Even the romantic middle-aged, Middle-Western, naturally irrepressible Medora Phillips becomes a wraith before the end. Mr. Fuller has chosen a method difficult to sustain with so broad a subject, the method of a closely etched allusive irony. But at least the book cleaves a genuine way into the sprawling thicket of American college life.

C. M. R.

#### A REVIEWER'S NOTE-BOOK.

It is related of Napoleon that having, in 1816, while on Saint Helena, read in Sallust of the conspiracy of Catiline, he remarked that he was unable to understand what Catiline was driving at. No matter how much of a bandit he may have been, said the Emperor, he must have had some object, some social purpose in view. Pío Baroja, who reminds us of the incident, comments upon it as follows:

The observation of this political genius is one which must occur to all who read Sallust's book. How could Catiline have secured the support of the most brilliant men of Rome, among them of Julius Caesar, if his only plan and object had been to burn and loot Rome? It is not logical. Evidently Sallust lies, as governmental writers in Spain lie to-day when they speak of Lerroux or Ferrer, or as the republican supporters of Thiers lied in 1871, characterizing the Paris Commune.

THESE historians, how well we know them! We know them so well indeed that we have ceased to call them liars. Do they pervert the truth? What is truth? they might retort upon their accusers; and most of their accusers—being pragmatists, as a rule—would not, I fancy, care to stay for an answer. The fact is, we are all under the domination of leading ideas that are not, save in the rarest cases, our own: the disinterested mind is almost as rare as the roc's egg. The historians are like the rest of us: they have a certain conception of society which they believe they have thought out for themselves but which they have, in reality, absorbed from their friends, from the contemplation of their national flags or their

<sup>1</sup> "Tamarisk Town." Sheila Kaye-Smith. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co.

<sup>1</sup> "Bertram Cope's Year." Henry B. Fuller. Chicago: Ralph Fletcher Seymour.

party emblems, from the books of other worthy citizens and from their natural desire to witness and defend the triumph of their own customs. Sallust was no more a liar than Mr. James Ford Rhodes, and Mr. Rhodes is no more a liar than those who rewrite history in order to prove that Jesus was a labour-leader. To that extent, at least, one is obliged to accept the pragmatist position.

I SHOULD never presume, therefore, to criticize historians from the point of view of truth. My own prepossessions are too strong; my mind, like that of other practical Americans, is the helpless prey of my wishes. I have likes and dislikes; I dislike the historians whose likes are not mine. I also dislike a commercial society, I dislike the spectacle of business men living on the land like locusts and stripping it bare of everything but money and the things money can buy. And I have a notion that for this the historians are in some way to blame. There are times when I feel sorry for the business men because, in the process of stripping the land of everything but money, they so often strip themselves also: it is my impression that they do not actually prefer to have souls like dried nuts or to die in middle life of nervous disorders, but that, on the contrary, they would like to share in some of the emotional experiences that have found a sort of dim expression in the pictures they are so prone to collect after they have made their pile. And the historians, I think, might have done much to keep their souls alive. It is our American historians I have in mind. I do not accuse them of perverting the truth, I merely say that, in interpreting our history as they do—to please the business men, as they imagine!—they have overlooked certain essential facts and fallen far short of their opportunity.

THEY are dull, with hardly an exception. I have turned from one to another in the hope of discovering what sort of exciting adventures of the spirit my forbears must, as human beings, have found in life. Vain was my effort. Had they been explorers and trappers and pioneers, my forbears, I should have been better satisfied: the "romance of American history" has, I should be the last to deny, been worked for all it is worth. But while so many other little ancestral pigs went to market, my little ancestral pigs stayed at home, and what I can not believe is that they had so dull a time of it as the historians make out. I have heard legends, family legends—but these must wait until I have a long beard. I have, however, heard other people's family legends, too. I do not like to think that all these worthy folk stayed at home instead of going West merely because they lacked enterprise and courage, merely because they were humdrum and unenlightened: the legends I speak of suggest something quite different. "Dig where you stand" was one of their mottoes: they uttered it with a precision that hardly becomes contemporary lips, but they meant that the test of a spirit is what it can make out of circumstances. And it must be admitted that they deserve the credit of having put themselves to this test. I have been told indeed that progress owes less to those who migrate in search of freedom than to those who liberate themselves on their own acres (and in gaol, on occasion) and oblige their neighbours to come round to their way of thinking. That, it seems to me, is why Thoreau interests more people even than Daniel Boone. But somehow the historians fail to see it.

UNTIL quite lately I took it for granted, as most of us do, that American history was dull because the historians lacked the straw to make any other kind of bricks. Those interminable facts about the tariff, about the growth of industry, about the winning of the West, mechanical facts, romantic facts—is there anything to choose between them after one has passed the cowboy-and-Indian stage and has not yet arrived at the stage where dollars and cents compose the whole of life? I did not realize that American history was not to blame, but the minds of the historians. These historians, these latter-day historians of ours (Mot-

ley and Prescott are in quite a different category) had, I began to perceive, grown up in a world in which dollars and cents (and the infantile romanticism that issues from the same mint) were the sole desiderata. They consumed the newspapers, they interviewed the great financiers they met at their clubs, they visited the political conventions and, now and again, to get a breath of the bustling actuality, to prove to themselves that they were not mere scribes and that "manifest destiny" was indeed coming off, they took a trip through the Great Lakes or down the Mississippi. They wrote for the business men, and the business men occasionally snatched a moment in order to enjoy the casual pleasure of perceiving that history approved of them. And that was presented to us as the story of the American people!

TRUTH exists, after all; and I should be stretching it were I to say that during all this time great and momentous thoughts and passions agitated the souls of these simple folk at home. Who would insist that an admirably expressive literature, a noble art, a beautiful, creative religion occupied, behind the scenes of business, the spirit of the American people? Few were the mute inglorious Miltons our busy historians have left out of their picture; nevertheless, Gray was right when he spoke of the flowers that are born to blush unseen. Under the damp leaves of many winters, the winters of ignorance and poverty and hardship, of cruel traditions and perverse ideals, the flowers came to birth. Germination, gestation, creation, all the kindly and the terrible processes of the spirit unfolded themselves there. To few in that day, lost in the hamlets of New York and Vermont, confused and distorted by the delusions of a savage mythology, were given the words of Ulysses: "Consider from what seed you spring; you were not born to live like brutes but to follow courage and wisdom like a sinking star." Yet it is certain that men sought the sunlight with all the powers they had. I am not speaking of the days before the Civil War: though they have defamed Thomas Paine, and put Thoreau in his place as a cranky botanist, the historians have never quite succeeded in convincing us that we are descended, in the last resort, from sheep. But they have told us—it is not their fault; they have been deluded into thinking themselves patriots—that our fathers lived the sort of lives they wished to live, that reciprocal throat-cutting is the natural mode of democracy and that a country is great in the measure of its statistics. They have given us, in short, the sour grapes of our history: no wonder our teeth are set on edge.

AND are the business men themselves so pleased, after all, with a history that has been composed especially for them? What do they think of the historians who have told them that they, by virtue of their conquests, are the legitimate masters of the world? Something in them desires, I fancy, as much as you and I, desire, to be told that history consists not of statistics but of the common secular creative effort of humanity which, however invisible it may sometimes be to the insensitive eye, never, in reality, falters. The business men defend themselves, I admit, against this damaging affection they can not always suppress, and they take pains to keep the Sallusts on their side; yet all the time they hope, or something in them hopes, to see the Catilines win. They may be grateful to the historians for giving them the past they want for their business. But they are aware that in the process the historians have disinherited them as men.

THE Reviewer recommends the following books to the notice of readers of the *Freeman*:

"The Principles of Sociology," by Edward Alsworth Ross. New York: The Century Co.

"Anthology of Modern Slavonic Literature," edited by P. Selver. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.

"An Adventure in Working-Class Education," by Albert Mansbridge. New York: Longmans, Green & Co.

When you censure the Age,  
Be cautious and sage,  
Lest the Courtiers offended should be:  
    If you mention Vice or Bribe,  
    'Tis so pat to all the Tribe;  
Each cries—That was levell'd at me.

THUS MR. GAY, some two hundred years ago. The same apprehension prompts discreet souls to say to the FREEMAN, "Yes, it's true, but you oughtn't to say it just that way, because, you know," etc., etc. The discreet souls scarcely realize that in large part the FREEMAN's success is due to the very frankness that offends the courtiers. The Macedonians may have been a "rude and clownish people," but they called a spade a spade.

EVERY day we receive further confirmation of the satisfaction and joy that the FREEMAN brings to thousands who have yearned for the "glad waters" through which this paper is piloting them. Some are grateful for the illumination on social, political and economic issues, others take pleasure in the articles dealing with the arts and science, while very many express their appreciation of the literary criticisms and "A Reviewer's Note-Book."

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